United Nations A/C.5/59/SR.46

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
31 May 2005

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 46th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 May 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

Contents

Organization of work

Agenda item 106: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*)

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

05-32871 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/59/L.49)

1. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to the proposed programme of work and to the list of documents to be considered during the current part of the resumed session (A/C.5/59/L.49).

2. **Mr. Meyer** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, endorsed the proposed programme of work. The Fifth Committee must ensure that the Secretary-General had adequate resources to implement United Nations peacekeeping operations, on the understanding that the mandates of such operations reflected the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. However, he was concerned at the high level of resources requested and, in that connection, stressed that peacekeeping budgets must be properly justified with a view to achieving maximum efficiency. The Rio Group was particularly interested in the cross-cutting issues relating to peacekeeping and was prepared to work constructively to address them during the current part of the resumed session.

3. He recognized the need for a detailed examination of a strategy designed to put an end to sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations and stood ready to consider carefully the financial implications of the implementation of the proposals and recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Nevertheless, he was concerned that the establishment of Personnel Conduct Units in New York and all missions in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 would lead to duplication of work which, in turn, would have financial implications. The Secretariat should provide specific clarification on that issue.

4. The Rio Group continued to follow peacekeeping activities with interest, in particular the situation in Haiti, and remained committed to restoring political and social stability and democracy to that State, as contained in the Rio Declaration of November 2004.

5. Lastly, he was concerned about the relatively short period of time set aside for consideration of the capital master plan. The Secretary-General should submit an updated report on that issue so that the Committee could discuss it in detail.

6. **The Chairman** said that he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that adjustments would be made, as necessary, during the course of the session.

7. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 106: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*) (A/59/5 (Vol. II) and Corr.1, A/59/704 and A/59/736)

8. **Mr. Cabatuan** (Chairman of the Audit Operations Committee of the United Nations Board of Auditors), introducing the report of the Board of Auditors for the 12-month period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 on United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/59/5 (Vol. II) and Corr.1), said that the report's format mirrored that of previous reports but incorporated a number of improvements suggested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

9. In addition to issues raised with the Administration, the report addressed the four specific requests made by the Advisory Committee in document A/58/759 and by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/318. First, the Advisory Committee had asked the Board to look into the issue of the management of rations in peacekeeping operations as a whole. While the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had implemented a number of measures to improve rations provision, management and accountability, some concerns had not yet been fully addressed. The Board had also observed that there was no continuous cooperation on the monitoring of rations among the missions and Headquarters and had recommended that the Rations Management Manual should be finalized expeditiously, that the rations management standard operating procedures of missions should be reviewed and that the performance standards for rations vendor evaluations should be refined and rolled out to all missions.

10. Secondly, the Advisory Committee had also requested the Board to follow up on the issue of periodic and timely management reviews. However, since the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been unable to provide the Board with an overall plan or schedule for the periodic assessment of missions, it had been unable to assess the extent of such reviews or assessments. Accordingly, it had recommended that the Department should properly plan and monitor centrally all reviews and periodic management assessments of

peacekeeping missions. The Board had also been asked to follow up on the review of the staffing and organizational structure of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) conducted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in April 2003, and had recommended that all reviews should be finalized, even if that meant reporting on disagreements.

11. Thirdly, the Advisory Committee had requested the Board to follow up on the matters detailed in chapter II, paragraph 5 (c) of the report (A/59/5 (Vol. II)) and those issues had been addressed in the relevant sections of the report.

12. Lastly, in its resolution 57/318, the General Assembly had requested the Board to review the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The Board had reviewed 41 of the 51 recommendations approved by the Secretary-General and, to the extent possible, had gauged the effects of the management reform measures taken since the approval of the relevant report. Given the absence of an overall project plan to coordinate the implementation of the Panel's recommendations, there were no indicators against which to formally measure the combined impact of their implementation.

13. With regard to the financial statements, and as reflected in chapter III of the report, the Board had issued an unmodified opinion for the year ended 30 June 2004. The financial position of the Organization as at that date and the results of operations for the period in question had been presented fairly and in accordance with United Nations accounting policies.

14. Summarizing the Board's main findings, the overall financial situation of United Nations peacekeeping operations had deteriorated in comparison to the previous financial period. Outstanding assessed contributions had increased by 41 per cent, meaning that less cash was available to settle liabilities.

15. The Board took the view that centralized monitoring could be enhanced in several operational areas. With regard to air operations management, insufficient aviation assessments and air carrier on-site visits had been conducted and, as at December 2004, the new aircraft tracking system piloted at the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) had not been evaluated.

16. As at 30 June 2004, total accumulated expenditure for strategic deployment stocks amounted to US$ 141.5 million. Policies and procedures regarding the rotation and replenishment of those stocks had been drafted but not yet finalized. With regard to rations management, the monitoring of contractors' quality management systems should be tightened and, in the area of procurement, while improvements had been noted in some areas, procurement plans were still not always submitted to Headquarters in a timely manner and some of the plans were incomplete. Furthermore, local vendors were still being entered into the database without prequalification, perhaps because the criteria for prequalification did not cater for local conditions. The non-availability of supplier evaluations had once again been noted. Lastly, a lack of local benchmarking had been observed at the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). A list of the Board's main recommendations was contained in paragraph 11 of chapter II.

17. The Administration continued to make steady progress in the implementation of the Board's previous recommendations, although the compliance rate had dropped from 59 per cent to 48 per cent and a number of recurrent findings had yet to be addressed. The Board had taken note of the new requests made by the Advisory Committee in its most recent report and would address them, as well as any additional requests from the General Assembly, before its next round of audits.

18. **Mr. Childerley** (Chief of the Oversight Support Unit of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2004 (A/59/704), said that the Administration, in cooperation with the Board, continued to strive to improve and expedite the reporting of progress made in the implementation of the Board's recommendations and, to that end, had been focusing on providing full and complete information to the Board for inclusion in its reports. The report before the Committee addressed 18 recommendations that required further comments from the Administration. The Secretariat stood ready to provide additional clarification on specific issues where necessary.

19. The Secretariat appreciated the spirit of constructive cooperation in which the Board discharged its oversight functions and was confident that its own commitment to the timely and thorough implementation of the Board's recommendations would contribute to improving the management of resources and to greater efficiency in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

20. **Mr. Kuznetsov** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/59/736), said that the Advisory Committee appreciated the Board's continued efforts to conduct management audits, since a good balance between financial and management audits was very beneficial to a comprehensive understanding of the health of peacekeeping activities.

21. While the presentation of the Board's report had been further improved, the document itself remained lengthy and the Advisory Committee took the view that some of its descriptive parts could be streamlined without compromising quality. The Board should also formulate its recommendations in stronger and more direct terms and include, to the extent possible, expected time frames. In addition, reports of the Board should be followed up immediately and a system to monitor expected results and provide explanations for any impediments was needed. In that connection, the Advisory Committee hoped that the Secretary-General would do his utmost to expedite the establishment of a high-level follow-up mechanism.

22. He drew attention to the Advisory Committee's request that the Board should undertake an analysis of the operation of the support account. The Board could make an essential contribution to a further analysis of how the support account had evolved and of how it might further evolve. Lastly, he was concerned about the state of management reviews in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The lack of plans, schedules or a systemic database to track the reviews undertaken was indicative of weaknesses in the management culture of the Department and the Advisory Committee therefore called for the designation of a focal point for assessment of the results of such reviews for possible application throughout the peacekeeping operations. Efficiency gains already achieved and the possibility of further gains through streamlining and improved methods should be taken into account before additional resources were requested.

23. **Mr. Kabuku** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, reiterated the Group's full support for the work of the Board of Auditors and welcomed the assurances that the principles of fair presentation and full disclosure were being respected. The Board should be commended for the quality of its report as well as for its continued efforts to improve the presentation. The summaries at the start of each major section and the references to and validation of the findings of the Organization's internal oversight body were particularly useful.

24. The Advisory Committee's extensive references to the Board's findings on management issues would enhance the Fifth Committee's consideration of broader peacekeeping policy issues. Furthermore, the management audits provided Member States with an opportunity to evaluate the performance of the Administration in an objective manner. The Board should continue to strive to strike a balance between the need to provide stakeholders with sufficient information and its efforts to streamline its reports.

25. With regard to the special requests made by the Advisory Committee, the Board should inform Member States of any additional resource requirements arising from additional audits and, in fulfilling the requests, the Board should continue to focus on those aspects falling within its technical purview. With specific reference to the request contained in paragraph 21 of the Advisory Committee's report, he stressed that the civilian support component of peacekeeping missions did not relate only to the troop strength of a given mission. It also had to respond to the size of the given mission area, the deployment locations within that area and the substantive components of the mandate.

26. Although some of the Board's recommendations might require a longer implementation period, primary managerial responsibility and accountability for implementation lay with department heads and programme managers. He therefore urged the Administration to pursue the timely implementation of all recommendations, particularly those that had not been implemented at all. The Administration should take stronger action to ensure that managers complied with the audit findings.

27. The Group concurred with the Board's main findings and recommendations. It agreed with ACABQ that cases of serious non-compliance with administrative instructions, which had led to over-

expenditure, should be addressed without delay. It had noted the recurrence of a number of findings from previous audits and urged the Administration to prioritize those areas and set time frames for the implementation of the relevant recommendations.

28. Member States must clarify the Board's responsibilities vis-à-vis those of the Administration in terms of the implementation of recommendations. The Group looked forward to receiving the Board's views on that issue. Decisions that unintentionally undermined the independence of the Board or its ability to assess the reasonableness of the Administration's response must be avoided.

29. The financial situation of United Nations peacekeeping operations had deteriorated and the Group was concerned about the impact of the ageing of unpaid assessments on the Organization's ability to meet its financial obligations, in particular the settlement of liabilities and reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, many of which were in Africa. All Member States should pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions to ensure the effective operation of all peacekeeping missions and timely reimbursements for troops and contingent-owned equipment.

30. He welcomed the Board's review of the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and noted that, in general, the Board had concurred with the earlier findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) contained in document A/58/746. The findings of the external and internal oversight bodies would enhance the Committee's consideration of the resource requirements for the support account, as well as its assessment of the impact of the collective efforts to reform United Nations peacekeeping.

31. In conclusion, the African Group was encouraged by the collaboration between the oversight bodies in the planning of audit activities. That interaction would ensure the optimal use of audit resources, improved complementarity of efforts and wider coverage of audit areas.

32. **Mr. Yoo** Dae-jong (Republic of Korea) said that the Board's report was a vital tool that provided a comprehensive overview of the financial situation of peacekeeping operations. At a time when the number, size and cost of missions were on the increase, it was all the more impressive that the implementation rate of the Board's recommendations had increased considerably as compared to previous years. While significant improvements had been made to the report, in particular the inclusion of information about the status of past recommendations, it could be further refined. He would like to see expected time frames for the implementation of recommendations and the ages of previous recommendations, which would help to measure progress more accurately.

33. A more formal mechanism was needed to follow up on recommendations and ensure accountability and, in that context, he encouraged the Secretary-General to expedite the establishment of such a mechanism. In addition, the role and function of the resident auditors should be more clearly defined and lessons learned with regard to their assignment should be evaluated.

34. The 41 per cent increase in outstanding assessed contributions meant that less cash was available and the ageing of unpaid assessments was cause for concern. However, tighter financial control of peacekeeping operations might give rise to a more accurate picture of current financial needs and reassure Member States that their paid assessments were being properly managed. The support account had grown by 217 per cent between 2000 and 2005, and 110 new posts had been requested for the support account for the period 2005-2006. However, new management tools, training, information technology and other factors should lead to reduced support account requirements.

35. The Advisory Committee was right to question the value of management reviews with unavailable findings and to point out the weaknesses in the management culture of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. As peacekeeping operations took on increasingly complex tasks in a growing number of locations, the management practices of the Department must be improved significantly. A focal point for analysing and assessing management reviews and applying their results throughout the Department was needed and its work should be linked to that of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/292, A/59/681, A/59/691, A/59/701, A/59/714 and Add.1, and A/59/730)

36. **Mr. Sach** (Controller) said that the previous 12 months had proved to be an extraordinary challenge to the Secretariat in deploying and managing peacekeeping operations. In the spring of 2004, the Security Council had established three large new peacekeeping operations: the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). The United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) had entered new phases during the period 2004-2005. The operations of MONUC had again been expanded by the Council in October 2004. On 24 March 2005, the Security Council had authorized the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) for which the Committee had just recently concluded its review and approved start-up funding.

37. The final requirements for the financing of peacekeeping operations for the period 2004-2005 had just been completed. In June 2004, the General Assembly had appropriated a total amount of $2.8 billion. In the fall of 2004, it had appropriated resources for MINUSTAH, ONUB and UNMISET and additional resources for UNAMSIL and UNOCI. By the end of October 2004, the total peacekeeping budget for the 2004-2005 period had amounted to $3.9 billion. The final approved budget level for 2004-2005 had risen to $4.4 billion, as a result of the additional resources approved in the revised budget for MONUC, the commitment authority for UNMIS and the revised appropriation for UNMIK.

38. For the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004, total resources had amounted to $3 billion, including resources for recruitment against peacekeeping support account posts and for the United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) at Brindisi. Related expenditures had amounted to $2.9 billion, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $149.9 million. The overall budget implementation rate had been 95 per cent, which was higher than the overall implementation rate of 92 per cent for the previous financial period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003. Notable among the missions was the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), with an implementation rate of 97 per cent in its first full budget year, which demonstrated the strides that the Secretariat had made in improving the administration and management of peacekeeping operations.

39. The period 2003-2004 was also the first performance period for which the missions were able to assess their performance against the planned results-based frameworks set out in the 2003-2004 budgets. The performance reports compared actual to expected progress and outputs for each mission. They also reflected the Secretariat's efforts to enable Member States to make fully informed decisions on peacekeeping missions by providing clearly measurable information on results and on the missions' contribution to them.

40. In addition to the timely submission of budgets for missions on the normal cycle, the Secretariat had also been able to submit full budgets for recently established peacekeeping missions within three months of the respective Security Council decisions. For UNMIS, for example, it had submitted initial financing arrangements for start-up requirements for the period from 1 July 2004 to 31 October 2005 within one week of the establishment of the Mission on 24 March 2005. Similarly, initial financing arrangements had been submitted for ONUB on 24 May 2004 (A/58/802), following its establishment by the Security Council on 21 May 2004, and its 2004-2005 budget had been submitted on 24 August 2004 (A/59/300).

41. In the light of past experience, average actual costs for salaries by grade level for each peacekeeping mission had been used in the calculation of the 2005-2006 staffing estimates. For common staff costs, a weighted average per centile of total salaries had been used based on actual costs and by peacekeeping mission. That was the first time that the Administration had deviated from the previous practice of using New York-based standard salary costs and making arbitrary mission-specific reductions on standard common staff costs to take into account the number of mission appointees. The Administration would assess the validity of its new approach to achieve more realistic budgeting estimates during the preparation of the 2006-2007 budget estimates.

42. The 2005-2006 budgets for 13 out of 15 ongoing missions, the support account and UNLB, totalling $3.6 billion, had been submitted. That lower figure reflected the absence of the full budgets for MONUC

and UNMIS and included only the commitment authority requests for the period from 1 July to 31 October 2005. The detailed 2005-2006 budgets for MONUC and UNMIS would be submitted for consideration and approval by the Assembly at its sixtieth session. The budgets for 2005-2006 took into account the downsizing of UNAMSIL and UNMIK, the liquidation of UNMISET and the planned downsizing of UNMIL on the assumption that elections would be completed in October 2005.

43. Owing to the completion in April 2005 of all financing approvals for the 2004-2005 period, it had not been possible to submit an overview report on peacekeeping operations. On the assumption that the peacekeeping financial cycle would stabilize in 2005, the Administration planned to prepare and submit such a report for the second part of the resumed sixtieth session which would reflect performance for the 2004-2005 period, proposed budgets for 2006-2007 and significant cross-cutting operational issues that affected the management of peacekeeping operations.

44. With respect to the performance report on the budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/714 and Add.1), peacekeeping in the 2005-2006 period was expected to reach the unprecedented level of almost $5 billion and was not projected to significantly decrease in the subsequent one to two financial periods. For the period 2005-2006, further progress was planned towards rapid deployment capacity and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping support operations. That progress was demonstrated in the indicators of achievement in the results-based frameworks for each of the departments with support account resources.

45. The recent surge in peacekeeping had put an extraordinary strain on the capacity of the Secretariat to adequately support peacekeeping operations. In addition to 16 peacekeeping missions, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations managed the administrative and logistical support for 13 special political missions. In order to meet immediate capacity needs, temporary and ad hoc arrangements had been made for the Department to utilize vacant mission posts.

46. The total authorized number of military and civilian police personnel in peacekeeping operations had increased from 47,883 in 2001-2002 to 64,709 in 2004-2005 and was projected to reach 68,843 in 2005-2006. The substantial growth in the number of authorized military and civilian police personnel directly affected the ability and capacity of all concerned offices in the Secretariat to support and manage peacekeeping operations. As a result, the 2005-2006 budget included proposals for an increase of 110 posts, including the transfer of 10 resident auditor posts from the mission budgets of MINUSTAH, ONUB and UNOCI.

47. For the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004, approved resources and expenditures amounted to $111.2 million, with an unencumbered balance of $0.87 million, resulting in an overall budget implementation rate of 99.2 per cent. The unencumbered balance was attributable primarily to underexpenditure in respect of consultants, official travel, facilities and infrastructure and other supplies, services and equipment. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 45 of the performance report.

48. With respect to the budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (A/59/730), approved resources for 2004-2005 amounted to $121.6 million against a proposed 2004-2005 budget of $150.7 million. The report reflected an increase of 110 posts, comprising 100 new posts and the transfer of 10 resident auditor posts from mission budgets. The report also reflected the rejustification of six posts, but no reclassification of posts.

49. The additional requirements under general temporary assistance related to the pilot project on freight-forwarding operations of the Procurement Service; clearance of backlogs of the Archives and Records Management Section; processing of sexual exploitation and abuse cases in peacekeeping missions by the Administrative Law Unit of the Office of Human Resources Management; and the development of a field finance training course module and standardized budget templates for various sizes of missions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The additional resources under consultants were required for the development of tools to capture best practices for the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit in the Department; an independent review of the reform and restructuring of the Department; development of management tools for the monitoring of human resources in peacekeeping missions; and

development and implementation of two new information management systems, the customer relationship management programme and the Enterprise Content Management programme (ECM). Additional requirements under information technology included the maintenance and enhancement of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit's website and the development of the new information technology projects: the Department of Peacekeeping Operations portal and ECM. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 407 of the budget report.

50. The report of the Secretary-General on criteria used for recruitment to support account posts (A/58/767), took into account the situation of troop-contributing Member States. The methodology used in the report provided for a number of options in conjunction with the system of desirable ranges for recruitment against posts financed by the support account.

51. The small number of factors that could be used to determine a system of desirable ranges included membership, population, contribution and troop contribution. The analysis in the report showed that the differences between the proposed options were small. Reductions in the weight of the contribution factor in favour of the proposed new troop contribution factor had a marginal impact on Member States' representation status. The number of over-represented Member States remained unchanged and there would be slight changes in the current representation status of only a few Member States (major troop-contributing countries).

52. With regard to the performance report on the budget of the United Nations Logistics Base for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/681), total expenditure had amounted to $22.1 million against approved resources of $22.21 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $0.15 million and a budget implementation rate of 99.1 per cent. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 17 of the performance report.

53. Concerning the budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (A/59/691), $28.4 million had been approved for 2004-2005 against a proposed budget of $37.7 million. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 22 of the budget report.

54. The report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the strategic deployment stocks, including the functioning of the existing mechanisms and the award of contracts for procurement (A/59/701) included proposals based on the lessons learned from mission start-ups that might help in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the stocks used to support the rapid deployment of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 44 of the report.

55. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/59/292), the Secretariat had convened the 2004 Working Group on Contingent-owned Equipment from 23 February to 5 March 2004 to conduct a triennial review of reimbursement rates and to update the standards of major equipment and self-sustainment categories developed by the Phase II and Phase III Working Groups. In addition, the General Assembly had decided to request the Working Group to consider the proposed methodology contained in the report of the Secretary-General on review of the rates of reimbursement to the Governments of troop-contributing States (A/57/774). While the Working Group had agreed on a number of issues, consensus had not been reached on the following matters: the triennial review of reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment; a proposed refinement of the current methodology for the triennial rate review of contingent-owned equipment; a mechanism to provide guidance and decision-making on contingent-owned equipment; a proposed modular medical concept; and a proposed methodology to review the rates of reimbursement for troop costs. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 24 of the report.

56. The previous 12 months in peacekeeping had been turbulent and there were no signs that the situation would change in the near future. The year had demonstrated the commitment of all staff to getting the job done to the best of their abilities and had confirmed the volatile and unpredictable nature of peacekeeping, which would continue to challenge the commitment and dedication of the entire Secretariat.

57. **Ms. Scott** (Director of the Administrative Support Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations) introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on measures that would better streamline the policy guidelines related to the temporary duty assignment of staff in peacekeeping missions (A/57/787); measures to expedite recruitment for field missions, taking into account the delegation of recruitment authority to field missions, including the use of fair and transparent recruitment procedures and monitoring mechanisms (A/58/764); greater use of national staff in field missions (A/58/765); the status of the civilian rapid deployment roster (A/59/763); the staffing of field missions, including the use of 300 and 100 series appointments (A/59/762); training policy and evaluation system of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/753); and functional requirements of field missions for communication and information technology (A/58/740). Taken together, the reports offered insight into recent efforts to strengthen the ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to staff peacekeeping operations through competitive, fair and transparent processes that yielded highly qualified personnel.

58. The report of the Secretary-General on greater use of national staff in field missions (A/58/765) described the evolution of the use of national staff, including at the Professional level, in peace operations. The Department had adopted the "light footprint" strategy recommended by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and noted with satisfaction that the number of authorized national staff posts in field missions had increased since the report had been issued. As of mid-April 2005, that number had increased from 206 to 453, and the number of national staff in the General Service category had increased from 8,925 to 10,036, excluding the full deployment planned for UNMIS.

59. The report of the Secretary-General on the temporary duty assignment of staff in peacekeeping missions (A/57/787) described the various administrative mechanisms for the release of both international and locally recruited staff for temporary service with United Nations peace operations, as well as arrangements made for their return on completion of their assignments. While those mechanisms remained in effect, the context of the report had changed significantly with the surge in peacekeeping since October 2003. Additional developments included the measures to expedite recruitment for field missions, described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/764). Those measures included the development of generic job profiles and the circulation of generic vacancy announcements, using the Galaxy system, to build rosters of pre-vetted candidates to be made available to field missions. In an effort to enhance planning and to enable more timely recruitment efforts, an online vacancy tracking and reporting system was being introduced both at Department headquarters and in field missions. The Department was also developing further its electronic screening techniques to manage the exponential growth in the number of applicants.

60. The Department headquarters worked very closely with its colleagues in the field in the selection of suitable candidates for field service. With the exception of Pillar I and Pillar II recruitment for UNMIK and the civil administration component recruitment for UNMISET, recruitment authority to date had remained with Department headquarters. The Kosovo and Timor-Leste experiences had demonstrated the need to strengthen the guidance, training, tools and support provided before an expansion of delegated recruitment authority could be pursued.

61. The Department was re-profiling the role of the Chief Civilian Personnel Officer to reflect the skills and competencies required to exercise expanded authority. It would also expand its mission assistance visits to provide training, monitoring and support to field missions in the exercise of both administrative and recruitment authority.

62. Mission start-up was probably the most critical phase in the life of a mission. It was crucial for missions to get off to a good start. The report of the Secretary-General (A/59/763) described the civilian rapid deployment roster developed by the Department in 2003 to meet the critical civilian personnel requirements for the start-up, expansion or liquidation phase of a mission and evaluated the experience in the development and use of that roster during the surge in peacekeeping between October 2003 and 2004, on the basis of exercises conducted by the Office of Mission Support and the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit.

63. Those exercises had identified the need for improvements to be made in the process and for enhanced effectiveness and reliability of the rapid deployment roster. Measures should include expanding the pool of eligible staff who could participate in the

programme to include staff outside of the Department; mechanisms to strengthen the ability to identify and secure the timely release and return of all parties involved; expanding the length of deployment from 90 to 120 days; and strengthening the training of the rapid deployment team.

64. The report of the Secretary-General on staffing of field missions (A/59/762) dealt with the reappointment of mission staff members who had reached the four-year limit under a 300 series appointment of limited duration and submitted proposals on functions deemed relevant for reappointment under the 100 series. In summary, of the 346 international staff members who would have reached, or exceeded, four years of service under a 300 series appointment of limited duration by 30 June 2005, 287 had been deemed to meet the criteria set out in resolution 59/266. Of the remaining number, 48 staff members had not met those criteria owing to the anticipated downsizing in the mission in which they were serving; four staff members would reach the age of retirement before 30 June 2005; the performance of five staff members had not been confirmed as fully satisfactory; and the appointments of two staff members remained under review.

65. In addition to the traditional peacekeeping role, mission mandates had grown more complex, involving a variety of tasks that included political work, governance, humanitarian activities, human rights, rule of law and security and protection. Missions were often operating in long-lasting and dangerous post-conflict situations. In practical terms, the new peacekeeping model meant that the Department had to attract, recruit and develop highly skilled and experienced staff, retain their services and adequately compensate them for the dangerous and difficult conditions under which they served.

66. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the training policy and evaluation system of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/753), she said that the overall objective of the training policy was to ensure that peacekeeping personnel were qualified to meet the evolving challenges of peace operations. In that context, the training policy would establish benchmarks and certifications for the specific skills and competencies required of military, civilian police and civilian personnel, as well as for the requirements common to all categories of personnel. An integrated approach was being applied so as to ensure optimal use of resources, with activities being directed towards the achievement of the Department's strategic goals, priorities and mission mandates. The proposed system to monitor and evaluate the results of training was based on the Kirkpatrick model (A/58/753, para. 27). Evaluation would be dealt with comprehensively on five ascending levels, enabling the Department to analyse not only what participants had learned at the conclusion of the training, but also the benefit to missions and the contribution to the attainment of the Department's objectives.

67. The report of the Secretary-General on the functional requirements of field missions for communication and information technology (A/58/740) outlined the mandate of the Communications and Information Technology Service and the wide range of services provided to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at Headquarters and to peacekeeping and other supported missions, offices, tribunals and agencies. The Service worked in close cooperation with the Information Technology Services Division of the Office of Central Support Services to establish enterprise architecture and set standards to promote inter-operability and integration. The report detailed the strategies employed to make sure that information and communication technology (ICT) assets were managed in the most cost-effective and efficient manner throughout the entire life-cycle of the equipment, as well as the governance structures in place in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to ensure the alignment of ICT strategies with the Department's programme objectives. The relationship between the Communications and Information Technology Service at Headquarters and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and field missions was outlined in annex I to the report; annexes II and III contained graphs and tables showing the rate of replacement of information technology equipment and the status of new and ongoing projects.

68. **Ms. McDonald** (Director of the Facilities and Commercial Services Division in the Office of Central Support Services) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the analysis of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions in Brindisi, Italy (A/59/703), which summarized the findings of an independent study on the feasibility and potential impact of relocating various logistics and procurement support functions from Headquarters to the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. An

international consulting firm had been engaged to conduct the study to ensure that it was thorough and objective.

69. The independent consultants had determined that it was important for procurement and logistics functions to be co-located owing to their close interdependence. However, the establishment of a consolidated hub at Brindisi would require the relocation of approximately 130 posts. A survey of the existing infrastructure had shown that major construction and refurbishment would be necessary to accommodate those additional staff. While the deficiencies identified by the consultants in terms of medical and education facilities were being remedied, to the extent possible, the financial benefits from the relocation of procurement and logistics functions would be very limited with only modest savings in operating costs of less than 5 per cent and with a return-on-investment period of nine years. The current trend in the United States dollar and euro exchange rates was also not favourable to such a move. Based on the consultants' analysis of the costs and benefits of relocation, the Secretary-General had concluded that it would be neither operationally advantageous nor cost-effective.

70. The report of the Secretary-General on procurement and contract management for peacekeeping operations (A/58/761) had been issued in response to concerns raised by the Board of Auditors and the General Assembly. It addressed such matters as the issuance of a code of ethics for procurement staff, procurement planning, training, measures to improve lead time, vendor performance reporting and vendor registration. Document A/59/688 contained an update of the report covering the latest developments in procurement and contract management in peacekeeping operations.

71. The Procurement Division in the Department of Management and the Logistics Support Division in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were working closely together to improve performance in those areas, and significant progress had been made. For example, the ethical guidelines for staff members involved in the procurement process were being finalized and would shortly be submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of Human Resources Management for comments. The declaration of ethical responsibilities had been reviewed by those offices and was about to be promulgated via a Secretary-General's bulletin. The vendor code of conduct had been finalized, and the Procurement Division was currently working on implementing guidelines to accompany it. A revised delegation of authority document had been issued to the Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support in February and would be transmitted to peacekeeping missions following clarification of certain operational issues. Lastly, the Administration was taking steps to improve the quality and timeliness of procurement planning in the missions, which was critical to effective and efficient procurement management.

72. **Mr. Hanrahan** (Chairman of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment), introducing the report of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment (A/C.5/58/37 and Corr.1), said that the Working Group had met from 23 February to 5 March 2004. Four sub-working groups had been established to discuss the four main items on the Working Group's agenda: major equipment, self-sustainment, medical support services and troop costs.

73. It had been clear from the outset that a number of Member States had concerns about the data-collection methodology, although others fully supported it as a sound and comprehensive basis for conducting the triennial reviews. Owing to those differences of opinion, no consensus had been achieved on the triennial reviews of reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment. However, with regard to major equipment, agreement had been reached on a further definition of when a commercial pattern vehicle should be reimbursed as a military pattern equivalent, on standard reimbursement rates for certain special cases and new categories of major equipment, and on a threshold value of $500 for special cases, while in the self-sustainment sub-working group, consensus had been achieved on a new quarterly verification process.

74. The medical support services sub-working group had reviewed a modular medical concept paper and national cost data for pharmaceuticals, predeployment vaccination and medical self-sustainment. Consensus had been close on those issues, but the failure to reach agreement on major equipment and self-sustainment rates had impacted the discussions in the sub-working group.

75. The troop costs sub-working group had reviewed the proposed methodology for rates of reimbursement to Governments of troop-contributing States, as contained in document A/57/774. It had also

considered basic salary and allowances, allowances for the usage of personal clothing, pre-post and post-deployment medical costs, travel costs, peacekeeping-related training costs and the status of the daily allowance. However, no consensus had been achieved on those issues. There was an urgent need to replace the current subjective reimbursement methodology, which had been approved on an interim basis in 1974. The report of the Secretary-General on reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/59/292) seemed to offer a way forward. The Committee should take action on the report before the Working Group's next session.

76. **Mr. Kuznetsov** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related reports of ACABQ (A/59/708, A/59/722, A/59/736 and Add.2 and A/59/784), expressed appreciation to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for the close cooperation afforded the Advisory Committee and the speedy issuance of its reports. While there had been an improvement in the timely submission of peacekeeping-related reports, in 2005, reports on some of the largest missions had not been submitted for consideration by the Advisory Committee until the end of its winter session. That had left a very narrow window for the Advisory Committee's own reports to be finalized, processed and issued in time for their consideration by the Fifth Committee at the second part of the resumed session. Given the current level of peacekeeping activity, those difficulties were likely to persist. There was thus a need to consider how best to synchronize the work of the Advisory Committee and that of the Fifth Committee. In his view, more time should be allowed between the end of the Advisory Committee's winter session and the start of the second part of the resumed session so that delegations had sufficient time to read and digest the reports of ACABQ before debating them in the Fifth Committee. Given the time taken to prepare the Secretary-General's reports, it would be unrealistic to expect the Advisory Committee's winter session to start earlier than the beginning of February. It would therefore be advisable to consider starting the second part of the resumed session later in the month of May.

77. The Advisory Committee's workload at its winter session made it imperative to limit that session to the consideration of peacekeeping-related reports, as was intended in General Assembly resolution 49/233 A. The Advisory Committee would therefore seek to maintain its practice of considering only peacekeeping issues at its winter session, unless a time-sensitive matter emerged requiring immediate appropriation. In that connection, he reiterated that related issues should be grouped together in a single report and addressed comprehensively, instead of piecemeal in a series of reports. To the extent possible, matters related to the regular budget should be dealt with in the context of the overall consideration of regular budget issues. If the Fifth Committee was to function efficiently, there must be an orderly process for the consideration of the many issues before it. That would also facilitate the Advisory Committee's contribution to its work.

78. Matters arising from the reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations and other peacekeeping matters were addressed, for the most part, in the Advisory Committee's general report (A/59/736). As stated therein, the Advisory Committee was becoming increasingly concerned about unevenness in the quality of presentation of the documentation submitted to it. Conditions in the field could make it difficult to carry out a rigorous budget exercise according to strict procedures and guidelines. It was therefore important to appoint the best and most experienced managers to carry out administrative, financial and budgetary responsibilities in peacekeeping missions. Weaknesses in those areas could affect a mission's ability to carry out its mandate efficiently and effectively. In addition, the provision by missions of information that was incomplete, inaccurate or needing revision impeded the work of the Advisory Committee. The ultimate responsibility for maintaining standards with regard to the presentation and timeliness of budget submissions and the integrity of the information contained therein lay with the responsible officials of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management, who must also ensure that the directives of the General Assembly were implemented, both at Headquarters and in the field.

79. The administrative structures of missions, especially complex integrated missions, were a matter of continuing concern to the Advisory Committee. In some cases, reviews were being carried out, but in others, there was little evidence that serious thought was being given to streamlining and rationalizing duplicative and top-heavy arrangements. There was

also a growing tendency to establish new units to carry out additional functions, which could either be combined or assigned to staff carrying out other related functions. In order to address those issues, any mission that had not already done so should consider establishing a management committee consisting of section chiefs who would meet from time to time to share information and assess reports of the staff charged with carrying out administrative, management, financial, budget and information functions and report to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General as needed. In addition, there was a need to clarify how Joint Mission Analysis Cell functions could be coordinated with strategic planning and best practices functions.

80. The Advisory Committee had also noted with concern the tendency to use peacekeeping budgets to introduce initiatives with policy implications without first seeking the necessary guidance from the General Assembly. One such initiative was the proposal in a number of budgets to use assessed contributions to fund activities under the humanitarian pillar of peacekeeping operations, which had traditionally been funded through voluntary contributions. The General Assembly should pronounce itself on the matter so that a consistent policy could be adhered to in the preparation of peacekeeping budgets. A related issue was the funding of the position of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in charge of the humanitarian pillar. The Advisory Committee was of the view that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should fund the posts up to the D-2 level, with the United Nations paying any additional amount required should the posts be established at a level higher than D-2.

81. The report also examined the latest advances in results-based budgeting. While significant progress had been made, further effort was required in some areas. The effectiveness of results-based budgeting depended on having adequate financial systems to support it. The intergovernmental consideration of budgets remained input-driven. A commitment was therefore needed on the part of all concerned to make results-based budgeting a truly effective management and decision-making tool.

82. The Advisory Committee's discussion of general issues relating to the military component of peacekeeping operations had touched on such matters as rations, troop-strength reporting and accommodation for military personnel. Improvements had been noted in the timely and cost-effective provisions of rations. However, several issues, including quality assurance, still needed to be addressed. The primary consideration should be the efficient supply of fresh high-quality food to military personnel, taking into account any cultural or religious requirements.

83. Regarding the civilian component, a major concern was the proposal to convert a large number of personnel on special service or individual contractor agreements to national General Service staff, with the explanation that those personnel carried out core or continuing functions. Proper budgetary procedure required that continuing functions should be carried out by staff occupying established posts, with the related costs charged against staff costs rather than operational costs. However, over the years the Secretariat had consistently misused the provision for special service and/or individual contractor agreements, resulting in adverse financial implications. The Advisory Committee therefore requested that future submissions should contain detailed performance information on arrangements with individual contractors in order to confirm that they were being hired in accordance with proper procedure. Similarly, information should be provided on any planned use of such arrangements in the forthcoming period. The Advisory Committee also highlighted in its general report the need to increase the use of national staff, expedite the review of the Field Service category and define clear parameters for the employment of United Nations Volunteers.

84. With regard to operational activities, the Advisory Committee had made wide-ranging comments and recommendations in a number of areas. It had, inter alia, emphasized the need for mission-specific training and for a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of training and track competency gaps. The model developed must be specifically suited to the unique organizational qualities and particular skill requirements of the United Nations and its peacekeeping activities. Travel must be strictly monitored, particularly training-related travel, and maximum use should be made of advances in communication and information technology. Given the high cost of ground transportation, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should develop a policy with regard to the purchase and assignment of both standard civilian and specially equipped armoured vehicles, as well as representational vehicles. Advice should be

sought from the Department of Safety and Security and others concerning security and road safety requirements for special vehicles. Concerning air transportation, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was again asked to address the chronic problem of overbudgeting, while the Board of Auditors was requested to look into medical evacuation arrangements in the missions. Other issues examined included unnecessary expenditure on special equipment for aircraft, the need for an aircraft tracking system and inter-agency cooperation in the use of air assets. The Advisory Committee welcomed the intention of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to regionalize its air operations approach and encouraged missions to keep the use of executive jets under review.

85. In its report on the support account (A/59/784), the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of nearly $7.1 million in the proposed budget for the support account for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. A total of 110 additional posts were proposed for establishment under the support account in 2005-2006, including 10 resident auditor posts to be transferred from mission budgets. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of 69 posts. Of the remaining 41 posts, the functions of 4 posts should be provided through redeployment and the functions of 14 posts through general temporary assistance.

86. A major concern of the Advisory Committee was the nature of the support account itself. Since its establishment in 1991, there had been a significant expansion of United Nations peacekeeping activities, as well as improvements in backstopping capacity. In addition, peacekeeping missions themselves had evolved substantially into complex operations of a multidimensional character with their own intellectual, managerial and logistical capacities. Moreover, considerable authority had been delegated from Headquarters to the field. The support account, too, had evolved well beyond what was originally foreseen. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to analyse the evolution of the support account, starting with the original concept of overload, and to describe changing needs to justify departures from that concept.

87. Another concern was the issue of coordination and cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs to ensure complementarity and avoid potential duplication and overlap. In that connection, the Secretariat should consider the possibility of redistributing resources between the two departments so as to reflect changes in activities and priorities.

88. The Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $6.2 million in the budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. That reduction was mainly the result of its recommendations related to the San Vito expansion project. The Advisory Committee had examined the site in May 2004 and had found the proposed expansion to be a good idea. However, the proposed arrangements with the Government of Italy, as well as between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the World Food Programme (WFP), together with the related financial implications, should be brought to the attention of the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee, before any agreement was signed. No action should therefore be taken yet with regard to the provision of $5.4 million for the first phase of the proposed expansion plan.

89. The Advisory Committee would not object to a one-time across-the-board conversion of 64 individual contractors into 64 national posts, since the functions they performed were required on a continuing basis. However, proper procedure should be followed without variance in future.

90. The proposed establishment of the Logistics Base training cell represented a new and important phase in the development of a Department-wide training strategy that would impact on resource requirements and on training programmes at Headquarters, in peacekeeping operations and at the Base. A comprehensive review of such a strategy should therefore be undertaken and its results reported to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. The report should specifically indicate the role of the proposed training cell in the overall training strategy and provide concrete workload statistics to justify the number of posts requested. Pending such a review, no action should be taken in connection with the proposed staffing requirements of the Base training cell.

91. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the use of savings derived from liquidation of strategic deployment stock obligations and the unspent balance to cover losses on currency exchange and replenishment of the stocks, as described by the Secretary-General in his report (A/59/701). It should also approve the inclusion of

replenishment of strategic deployment stocks within the $50 million commitment authority.

92. The Advisory Committee's comments regarding the report of the Secretary-General on an analysis of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions in Brindisi, Italy (A/59/703) were provided in its general report (A/59/736). Notwithstanding the disadvantages of relocating staff and resources to the Base, there was a greater potential to maximize the benefits derived from the considerable investment in information and communication technology at Brindisi and elsewhere. A further analysis should therefore be made of how the Base could best be utilized to provide efficient and economical communication, information and other services for United Nations peacekeeping and Headquarters clients. The analysis should also address the cost-effectiveness of reducing reliance on commercial providers in favour of increasing the role of the Base. Such an analysis should be available to the Committee in time for account to be taken of it during its consideration of the next round of peacekeeping budgets for 2006-2007.

93. The Advisory Committee's detailed comments on procurement and contract management for peacekeeping operations were contained in its report (A/59/722), which should be read in conjunction with its general report (A/59/736). Despite the progress made in recent years, problems persisted in the area of field procurement. The reports of the Secretary-General (A/58/761 and A/59/688), unfortunately, did not fully address the findings of the Board or other oversight bodies, including the specific measures taken to correct deficiencies, or the problems encountered by management in implementing related recommendations. Future reports should be more specific and fully reflect and build upon the findings and recommendations of the oversight bodies. They should clearly indicate the measures taken to implement them and constraints hampering their full implementation, and statements should be supported by specific examples and empirical data. All of that should be done in the context of the further development of a culture of accountability within the Organization, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/59/400, paras. 10 and 11).

94. The Secretary-General should finalize, promulgate and implement expeditiously the guidelines on ethical principles as well as the declaration of independence. The expeditious finalization and promulgation of the code of conduct for suppliers and the revised General Conditions were also recommended.

95. Efforts to improve the professionalism of procurement officers in peacekeeping missions were welcome and should also facilitate acceptance of increased responsibility by trained staff.

96. The Advisory Committee underlined the importance of revisiting procurement plans on a quarterly basis to ensure that they were updated with regard to the operational requirements of a mission, and the need to enforce the use of procurement plans as tools to facilitate effective and efficient procurement management, as recommended by the Board of Auditors. It noted the detailed information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on functional requirements of field missions for communication and information technology (A/58/740), which had been issued in response to the General Assembly's request for comprehensive information on the subject, and recalled that the aim of the report was to encourage the translation of advances in information and communication technology into identifiable productivity gains and, as far as possible, actual savings and/or increased potential for future economies, once the initial investment had been amortized.

97. The Advisory Committee's comments concerning the report of the Secretary-General on the training policy and evaluation system of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/753) were contained in its general report.

98. The reports of the Secretary-General introduced in documents A/57/787, A/58/764, A/58/765, A/59/762 and A/59/763 were all covered in the Advisory Committee's general report under the heading "staff in the field". The Advisory Committee noted that the Secretariat was preparing a comprehensive proposal on a framework for the use of staff in missions and recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the information contained in those reports. It noted further that one of the reports under consideration was several years old.

99. The Committee had often pointed to the need to reduce the number of reports prepared for submission to various intergovernmental bodies. To that end, the Secretariat should consider ways and means of

combining reports on similar and/or related issues. That approach would not only reduce the number of reports to be taken into consideration but would also provide for a more comprehensive consideration of the subject.

100. With regard to the report on staffing of field missions, including the use of 300 and 100 series appointments (A/59/762), the Secretary-General should be authorized to continue the practice of reappointing serving staff under 100 series contracts after they reached the maximum period of service permitted under a 300 series appointment of limited duration, subject to the criteria set out in section X, paragraph 2, of resolution 59/266, namely, a continuing need for their services and a fully satisfactory performance record. The criteria for reappointment should be rigorous and consistently applied. Pending consideration of the aforementioned comprehensive report, no action should be taken on appointing staff to the 100 series.

101. In its report on budgetary and administrative questions (A/59/708), the Advisory Committee pointed out that the General Assembly would have to decide, as a matter of policy, whether or not to accept the proposal of the Secretary-General to maintain the current reimbursement rates for troop costs until such time as the General Assembly determined that an adjustment was warranted (A/59/292, para. 25 (f)). The Advisory Committee recalled the recommendation contained in its previous report on the reform of the procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/55/887, para. 13), and recommended that consideration should be given to having recourse to a diverse group of qualified, experienced and impartial individuals, who would provide the broadest scope of background to study and make proposals on the factors and elements on which the reimbursement of troop costs could be based.

102. United Nations peacekeeping activities continued to grow in size and importance. The aggregate level of peacekeeping expenditure far outstripped the level of the regular budget. While there had been advances in attempting to regulate what used to be a very chaotic situation with regard to the administration and financing of peacekeeping operations, that area of activity lagged far behind the discipline which characterized the process for the regular budget. Peacekeeping activities would continue for the foreseeable future and it was incumbent on all concerned to learn from past successes and mistakes. The Committee intended to take an active role in fostering the establishment of consistency and efficiency in the structure, financing and operation of peacekeeping missions. It also stood ready to continue to encourage and contribute towards the orderly development of the peacekeeping side of United Nations activities.

103. **Ms. Dixon** (Officer-in-Charge of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the first year of experience of regional investigators in two hubs, Vienna and Nairobi (A/59/546), said that the report provided an assessment of the regional investigator programme of the Investigations Division of OIOS after its first year of operation (July 2003 to June 2004) as well as an overview of the caseload at the two regional hubs. The report highlighted some of the significant matters investigated, notably allegations of sexual exploitation against the civilian and uniformed personnel of MONUC and cases investigated by the anti-corruption Investigations Task Force initiated by OIOS and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

104. Most peacekeeping investigation cases handled by OIOS were located away from Headquarters, primarily in peacekeeping operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. In the annual period under review, there had been an increase of about 8 per cent in reports to OIOS of significant alleged wrongdoings at peacekeeping operations.

105. The investigation of significant, high-risk cases allowed regional investigators limited time to address other cases, which as a result might be delayed or referred to mission management. Accordingly, the time needed to complete an average case was estimated to have increased from 250 to 340 person-hours.

106. It was estimated that about 230 cases would be received for the year 2004-2005, about a third of which would be assessed as significant and requiring immediate investigation. Current investigative resources could not cope with that number of significant cases, let alone all the matters requiring investigation.

107. The Office's report concluded that a combination of regional and resident investigators would be the most beneficial and effective approach to meeting the

demand for immediate action to mitigate the risk of significant cases at field operations.

108. The investigations of OIOS had been generally well received by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and mission management, which were aware that mission-based, internal investigations might not produce results that were perceived to be sufficiently unbiased and evidence-based. The use of independent investigators from OIOS therefore not only ensured due process for all parties but also wider acceptance of the findings among all stakeholders.

109. The first year of operation had revealed the merits of the regional hubs to the extent that costs per case and travel times were significantly reduced compared to those for investigations handled by staff based at United Nations Headquarters. Thus, investigators could undertake more missions per year at less cost than had been anticipated.

110. Reliance on regional investigators alone, however, meant a loss of the ability of OIOS investigators to develop detailed knowledge of the individual missions, as was the case with resident investigators. The larger and more complex missions demanded a more readily available presence by investigators, especially for sexual exploitation and abuse cases and other cases that were time-sensitive.

111. Thus, a mixture of regional and resident investigators at the larger missions would better address the needs of the missions without compromising the investigation of significant cases at the other missions or the smaller, but potentially serious, cases at larger missions. Moreover, resident investigators could more readily respond to matters as they arose. That fact, in itself, could reduce further violations and produce more timely findings.

112. Managers at the peacekeeping missions had informed OIOS of the quicker response times of regional investigators compared to those of investigators previously based at United Nations Headquarters. The managers, particularly at the larger missions, had also indicated that resident investigators would be extremely useful since they could better address and provide advice to managers on a myriad of issues at the earliest possible juncture.

113. The closure of resident investigator offices in East Timor and Kosovo had had an adverse effect upon the number of reports received by the Office. Work for UNMIK and MONUC during the reporting period had effectively consumed all of the regional investigators' time. Resident investigators needed to be based at, and providing services to the smaller missions, as well as working on cases requiring substantial resources at the larger missions.

114. Introducing the report of OIOS on the global audit of field security management (A/59/702), she said that, following the Baghdad bombing, OIOS had decided to take a proactive role in helping the Organization to identify and mitigate the high risks that staff were exposed to in the field. Accordingly, OIOS had initiated a global audit of field security management that was planned and carried out in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and UNDP. The audit had been conducted in 15 field missions managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and five political and peacebuilding missions managed by the Department of Political Affairs.

115. The report consolidated the results of the 20 individual audits that had been conducted by OIOS in June and July 2004. Upon completion of the audits, OIOS had provided the Secretary-General with a summary of the main findings, which had been taken into account in the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthened and unified security management system for the United Nations (A/59/365).

116. While the audit showed that basic security arrangements existed or were being improved in most missions, there was still a considerable need for improvement in the following areas: security structures, both at Headquarters and in the field; security plans and policies and their implementation; deployment and administration of personnel; budgeting and resourcing; coordination with the host Government and the external military force and among United Nations agencies; and physical security.

117. The report raised several critical issues relating to the organization of the security function. Some missions had experienced difficulties in identifying and clearly understanding the roles of various security governing bodies and individuals. There was also some confusion as to whether the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator or the Department of Peacekeeping Operations security standards and operational guidelines should be applied in areas where

both peacekeeping missions and other United Nations organizations operated. Furthermore, many missions had insufficient resources to organize the security function to ensure compliance with security requirements. Reporting lines were also often inappropriate and there was a need to improve accountability and reporting procedures in mission security frameworks. In some missions, chief security officers did not report to, and were not evaluated by, the respective head of mission.

118. Most missions did not fully comply with the minimum operating security standards and the security plan was either incomplete or out of date, and often not tested or rehearsed. The security warden system was deficient in some missions and internal communications between staff and the mission security section were poor. Missions did not maintain updated lists of personnel and there was not enough awareness of the importance of security among United Nations personnel in some duty stations.

119. Immediate action was needed to address weaknesses in the physical security of United Nations personnel and premises. Security training also needed improvement to raise the level of staff awareness to potential threats and knowledge of security procedures in field missions.

120. The Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had accepted all 20 recommendations resulting from the global security management audit. OIOS would closely monitor the implementation of its recommendations and make every effort to assist the respective departments and field missions in developing a sound and transparent system of internal controls.

121. Introducing the report of OIOS on the audit of mission subsistence allowance policies and procedures (A/59/698), she said that the objectives of the audit were to determine whether the mission subsistence allowance rates established for special peacekeeping missions were reasonable and whether the Office of Human Resources Management had been monitoring the administration of those rates.

122. The mission subsistence allowance constituted a significant portion of overall peacekeeping costs. For the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, those payments were expected to exceed $554 million, or 15 per cent of the total budget expenditure of the 11 special peacekeeping missions. The establishment and management of the rates thus constituted an area of high risk to OIOS and the United Nations.

123. The rates set by the Secretary-General should reflect the subsistence costs (including food, lodgings and incidental items) based on the conditions that eligible peacekeeping staff actually incurred in each mission area. Furthermore, the rates should generally be lower than, and certainly not exceed, the daily subsistence allowance rates established by the International Civil Service Commission for short-term travel to the same locations, given that mission personnel were assigned for at least six months and therefore normally found hotels and did not always have to eat in restaurants.

124. While the Office of Human Resources Management had improved its oversight of mission subsistence allowance rates, three of the seven missions — the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and UNMISET — had rates higher than the applicable daily subsistence allowance rates. The Office of Human Resources Management had not agreed to lower the mission subsistence allowance rates in MINURSO and UNMEE, noting that the poor conditions of service in MINURSO warranted higher miscellaneous rates than were normally paid. It had also objected to having separate mission subsistence allowance rates in the two mission countries based on different daily subsistence allowance rates, noting that a mission-wide single rate would better meet operational requirements. Mission subsistence allowance rates in UNMISET had been lowered in response to the review.

125. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management had agreed that a workable solution regarding mission subsistence allowance rates, proposed by OIOS, was to undertake the comprehensive review requested earlier by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and to consider establishing a two-component mission subsistence allowance structure, one to cover food and housing and the other to compensate for the difficult living conditions encountered in peacekeeping duty stations.

126. OIOS would continue to monitor and review the reasonableness of new mission subsistence allowance rates and their administration. It stood ready to assist

the United Nations in ensuring that allowances for field staff were transparent and equitable.

127. **Ms. Beagle** (Director of the Division for Organizational Development in the Office of Human Resources Management), introducing the comments of the Secretary-General on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of mission subsistence allowance policies and procedures (A/59/698/Add.1), said that the report contained the findings of a further audit conducted by OIOS on the reasonableness of mission subsistence allowance rates in a number of special missions. The review examined how effectively previous recommendations had been implemented and considered how to resolve the differing views of mission subsistence allowance rates. It also assessed the monitoring capacity of the Office of Human Resources Management concerning the establishment and review of those rates.

128. In recommendations 1 and 2 of its report, OIOS recommended that the Office of Human Resources Management and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, assisted by independent experts, should conduct a review of the allowance structure for peacekeeping personnel, with particular reference to mission subsistence allowance rates. The Secretary-General responded that he saw those recommendations as an integral part of his efforts to improve the conditions of life and work of staff serving in peacekeeping missions. The review would not only respond to the request made by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations for an open and transparent review of the allowance structure but would also contribute to ongoing work in the common system to harmonize the entitlements of staff serving at non-family duty stations.

129. In recommendation 3, OIOS recommended that the Office of Human Resources Management should perform comparative analyses of mission subsistence and daily subsistence allowances on a monthly basis with a view to triggering the adjustment of mission subsistence allowance rates in the concerned missions. However, the Secretary-General drew attention to the very different purposes served by the daily subsistence allowance and mission subsistence allowance.

130. The mission subsistence allowance represented the total contribution of the Organization towards the living expenses incurred by staff and other personnel in connection with an assignment to a special mission. It had become part of the pay package rather than merely a subsistence allowance and thus might be more correctly called a "mission allowance".

131. Accordingly, the Secretary-General did not consider that there was justification for using an across-the-board set formula to determine mission subsistence allowance by reference to daily subsistence allowance. In response to the OIOS recommendation, however, the Office of Human Resources Management, for monitoring purposes, began undertaking monthly comparisons of both rates in localities where there were special peacekeeping operations.

132. In recommendation 4, OIOS recommended that the Office of Human Resources Management should apply a consistent policy in promulgating revised mission subsistence allowance rates by making new rates effective from the first day of the month following issuance of its final report on the rates. The Secretary-General had responded that it already implemented such a policy to the extent possible.

133. With respect to recommendation 5, the Secretary-General agreed that any technological advances that would enable the distribution and completion of the mission subsistence allowance questionnaire and the more timely analysis of the data collected would be beneficial. He noted, however, that the development or acquisition of specialized software would be subject to the availability of resources.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/59/SR.47

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
26 May 2005

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 47th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 May 2005, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

Contents

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 125: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Agenda item 126: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Agenda item 130: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Agenda item 131: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

Agenda item 132: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

05-32877 (E)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/57/787; A/58/740, A/58/753, A/58/761, A/58/764, A/58/765 and A/58/767; A/C.5/58/37 and Corr.1; A/59/292, A/59/546, A/59/681, A/59/688, A/59/691, A/59/698 and Add.1, A/59/701, A/59/702, A/59/708, A/59/714 and Add.1, A/59/722, A/59/730, A/59/736 and Add.2, A/59/762, A/59/763 and A/59/784)

1. **Mr. Monningstad** (Norway) said that Norway was strongly committed to peacekeeping. In order to maintain international peace and security, Member States must live up to their collective responsibility to provide the United Nations with the means to maintain and strengthen its capacity to plan and conduct increasingly complex peacekeeping operations. As the world faced new challenges, it was of paramount importance for Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. While considerable progress had been made in the overall conduct and management of peacekeeping operations, the Secretariat should continue to maximize the use of scarce resources and to strengthen the capacity of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to swiftly investigate allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions. A strict zero-tolerance policy must be enforced based on uniform and binding standards, and civilian managers and military commanders alike must be held accountable in order to restore the credibility of United Nations peacekeepers in their dealings with civilians in areas of conflict. The strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse had certain cost implications, but implementation of the recommendations contained in draft resolution A/C.4/59/L.20 must not be made dependent on voluntary contributions. Norway also fully supported the establishment of a new Personnel Conduct Unit to help prevent and identify misconduct and to ensure compliance with and enforcement of United Nations standards of conduct.

2. The scale of current demands for peacekeeping operations meant that even greater commitment was required from all the partners in the system, including regional organizations, whose active participation and knowledge of the area and of the nature of the conflict could be a huge advantage in the planning and conduct of operations. Critical gaps remained in the Organization's peacekeeping capacity, including in the areas of strategic lift, tactical air support, and field medical facilities. Norway welcomed the work being done to coordinate the role of the various United Nations entities in support of complex peace operations and encouraged further efforts to clarify roles, avoid overlapping of activities and ensure greater efficiency.

3. The development of a general policy for the financing of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) activities required in-depth discussion and guidance from the Secretariat and from humanitarian organizations, funds and programmes. Norway supported the inclusion of a cost basis in the assessed peacekeeping budget for DDR and other humanitarian tasks as part of the peacekeeping mandate. Member States had a responsibility to ensure predictable, stable and timely financing of all aspects of an integrated mission.

4. **Mr. Terzi** (Turkey) said that, owing to the growing size and complexity of peacekeeping missions, the Organization was facing a management challenge and growing pressure to improve efficiency and effectiveness as a result of increasing financial resource requirements. Recent large peacekeeping start-ups and the expansion of existing missions had tested the Organization's capacity to respond to requirements. Peacekeeping and related functions were the most important part of the Organization's management structure and successful design and implementation of ongoing reform efforts in such areas as human resources management, procurement, information and communications technology, and results-based budgeting were expected to increase significantly the efficiency and effectiveness of those functions. In that connection, he welcomed the successful completion of the two-year project to establish strategic deployment stocks at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy.

5. Procurement was one of the Organization's main expenditure items and support functions and the establishment of accountability mechanisms and solid rules and regulations were therefore critical in that area. Ethical responsibility and quality management measures should also be swiftly implemented, together with common procurement management systems, model lease and contract templates, performance rating and evaluation systems, and vendor registration and review measures. Global, automated and real-time

inventory management should be integral to effective management and control and the existing Galileo inventory management system should be expanded to cover all missions.

6. Because of the ever-increasing complexity of peacekeeping operations, a detailed management study should be conducted with a view to re-engineering their operational structure, processes and flows and pinpointing bottlenecks and inefficiencies. In that regard, he welcomed the decision of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to formulate a policy on the establishment of a Joint Mission Analysis Cell, which should cover all missions and related processes. Management audits could also be useful in identifying trouble areas.

7. Management reviews for periodic assessment of peacekeeping missions were another important tool, as was results-based budgeting, whose results for the financial period 2003-2004 would allow the Organization to establish a more realistic baseline for the 2005-2006 budget. Baseline data for the indicators from which improvement was to be measured should therefore be documented and a formal data collection system established to ensure the accuracy of the indicators of achievement and actual outputs. A performance appraisal system should also be integrated into results-based budgeting to improve its implementation. Managers and personnel should be careful, however, not to focus more on performance measures at the expense of the Organization's objectives. In addition to clear rules and regulations, operational standards should be developed wherever possible in order to improve operational efficiency.

8. Owing to their operational complexity, geographical dispersion and large financial expenditure, peacekeeping missions had more inherent control risk than other parts of the United Nations. Management should therefore restructure auditing with a view to improving coverage of field peacekeeping activities and developing benchmarks and parameters to facilitate future auditing.

9. The success of peacekeeping activities was closely linked to the solution of the root causes of conflicts and wars, which were primarily poverty and illiteracy. Peacekeeping missions should therefore be planned in an integrated manner with substantial development input from all United Nations agencies and funds. In that connection, accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals were of critical importance and a moral obligation.

10. **Mr. Iosifov** (Russian Federation), referring to the thirtieth session of the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group (IAPWG), to be held in Moscow from 23 to 27 May 2005, said that the organizers were ready to invite up to 15 observers from interested Member States to the open part of the session from 25 to 26 May. Given the limited number of places, invitations would go, as a matter of priority, to those delegations that had displayed interest in holding similar sessions in their countries in the future. Observers would bear any expenses incurred in connection with their travel and stay.

Agenda item 125: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/59/736/Add.8 and A/59/751)

Agenda item 126: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (A/59/620, A/59/656/Add.1 and A/59/736/Add.6)

Agenda item 130: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (A/59/616, A/59/636 and Corr.1 and A/59/736/Add.10)

Agenda item 131: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (A/59/622, A/59/634 and A/59/736/Add.7)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (A/59/614 and A/59/736/Add.14)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (A/59/623 and Corr.1, A/59/633 and A/59/736/Add.1)

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (A/59/624, A/59/630 and A/59/736/Add.11)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/59/625, A/59/653 and Corr.1 and 2, and A/59/736/Add.4)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/59/626, A/59/654 and A/59/736/Add.3)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (A/59/635 and Corr.1, A/59/736/Add.9, A/59/758 and Corr.1 and A/59/759)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (A/59/619, A/59/629 and A/59/736/Add.5)

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations (A/59/794)

Feasibility of consolidating the accounts of the various peacekeeping operations (A/59/795)

11. **Mr. Sach** (Controller) introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing and budgets of nine ongoing peacekeeping operations and two closed peacekeeping missions as well as two notes by the Secretary-General on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations (A/59/794) and on the feasibility of consolidating the accounts of the various peacekeeping operations (A/59/795). The mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) had expired on 31 December 2002. The final performance report (A/59/751) before the Committee showed that total income from the Mission's inception on 21 December 1995 to 30 June 2004 amounted to $1.2 billion, of which assessed contributions amounted to $1.1 billion. Total expenditures for the same period amounted to $961.9 million, inclusive of savings on or cancellation of prior-period obligations of $24.8 million. Credits returned to Member States amounted to $156.9 million. The prior-period adjustments totalled $723,000. Cash assets as at 30 June 2004 amounted to $26.3 million. The net cash available amounted to $7.2 million and uncollected assessments and other receivables amounted to $37.7 million.

12. Total expenditures for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) (A/59/620 and A/59/656/Add.1) for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 had exceeded the appropriation of $43.8 million by some $1.6 million or 3.7 per cent. Under the related proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the Secretary-General requested a total amount of $47.4 million, an increase of $200,000 or some 0.3 per cent, against the appropriation of $47.2 million for the current financial period.

13. With respect to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) (A/59/616 and A/59/636 and Corr.1), the appropriation of $188.4 million for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 had resulted in expenditure of $183.6 million and an unencumbered balance of $4.8 million or 2.5 per cent. Under the proposed budget for UNMEE for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $176.7 million, a decrease of $21.6 million or 10.9 per cent, against the appropriation of $198.3 million for 2004-2005. The lower resource requirements were attributable to the expected reduction in the military from its authorized strength of 3,980 to a budgeted strength of 3,184 by 1 July 2005 and a 10 per cent reduction in the level of civilian personnel.

14. Turning to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) (A/59/622 and A/59/634), he noted that $30.5 million out of the appropriation of $30.7 million for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 had been utilized, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $200,000 and a budget implementation rate of 99.2 per cent. For the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $35.5 million, an increase of $3.6 million or 11.2 per cent against the appropriation for the current period of $31.9 million. The increases were attributable to additional costs related to air transportation, infrastructure and the proposed establishment of 45 posts (42 security guards, one satellite technician, one information technology assistant and one finance assistant) and the application of a lower vacancy rate of 1 per cent.

15. On the final disposition of the assets of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

(UNIKOM) (A/59/614), he noted that the total inventory value of the Mission's assets as at 3 July 2003 amounted to $23.9 million. The value of assets transferred to other missions or for temporary storage at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy amounted to $12.6 million, representing 52.9 per cent of the total inventory value. The assets disposed of in the Mission area amounted to $3.7 million. The value of assets written off or stolen amounted to $7.5 million, representing 31.5 per cent of total inventory value.

16. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (A/59/623 and Corr.1 and A/59/633) had achieved a 99.99 per cent budget implementation rate, having utilized all but $9,000 of its appropriation of $315.52 million for the period 2003-2004. The Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $240.4 million for 2005-2006, representing a decrease of $54.2 million or 18.2 per cent against the approved appropriation of $294.6 million for 2004-2005. The change was attributable to the progressive reduction in civilian police personnel from 2,195 in July 2005 to 1,325 by June 2006, the repatriation of four special police units during the same financial period and a progressive reduction of international staff from 765 in July 2005 to 675 by April 2006.

17. With respect to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) (A/59/624 and A/59/630), total expenditure for 2003-2004 out of an appropriation of $564.5 million amounted to $548.2 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $16.3 million. The Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $722.6 million for the budget period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, representing a decrease of $99.4 million against the current appropriation of $822.0 million. The lower resource requirements were attributable to the repatriation of three infantry battalions as of 1 March 2006, on the assumption that the October 2005 elections took place as scheduled and were successful. Lower requirements would also stem from the fact that rations and cash compensation payments in relation to the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants would no longer be needed, as that phase of the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme would be completed in 2004-2005. There would also be reductions in helicopter requirements, although 11 additional posts for national staff would be required.

18. With regard to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) (A/59/625 and A/59/653 and Corr.1 and 2), of the $40.0 million which had been appropriated for the 2003-2004 financial period, total expenditures had amounted to $39.7 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $300,000. For 2005-2006, the Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $41.6 million, an increase of $700,000 against the appropriation of $40.9 million for the period.

19. With respect to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) (A/59/626 and A/59/654), $90 million had been approved for 2003-2004, of which total expenditure had amounted to $89.9 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $100,000. For the budget period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the Secretary-General proposed a budget of $94.3 million, an increase of $1.3 million against the appropriation of $93.0 million for the current period.

20. With regard to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (A/59/635 and Corr.1, A/59/758 and Corr.1 and A/59/759), total expenditure for 2003-2004 out of an appropriation of $520.0 million amounted to $448.7 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $71.3 million. For 2005-2006, the Secretary-General proposed a budget of $107.2 million, a decrease of $184.4 million or 63.3 per cent, against the appropriation of $291.6 million for 2004-2005. The primary factor in the reduction of those resources related to the anticipated closure of the Mission by 31 December 2005. As for the proposed donation of the Mission's assets to the Government of Sierra Leone, as at 30 June 2004, the assets were valued at $71.9 million, 12 per cent of which was proposed for donation to the Government. Withdrawal of the assets would impede the rehabilitation of the country because of the infrastructural and logistical challenges faced by its armed forces and police.

21. Some $41.5 million had been approved for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) (A/59/619 and A/59/629) for 2003-2004. There was an unencumbered balance of $2.7 million resulting from expenditures of $38.8 million. The Secretary-General proposed a total amount of $46.3 million for the budget period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, representing an increase of $4.4 million or 10.7 per cent against the appropriation of $41.9 million for 2004-2005. The increase was attributable to increases in the cost of petrol, oil and lubricants, the acquisition of closed circuit television and metal detectors to strengthen

security and safety, and additional air transportation requirements.

22. As far as the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations was concerned, the note by the Secretary-General (A/59/794) explained why the Secretariat would be unable to submit the report that had been requested by the Assembly before the second part of its resumed sixtieth session.

23. With regard to the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations, the note by the Secretary-General (A/59/795) explained the reasons for the delay in the submission of the report on the feasibility of consolidating the accounts of the various peacekeeping operations. The Secretary-General intended to submit the report for consideration by the Assembly at its sixtieth session.

24. **Mr. Kuznetsov** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the comments of the Advisory Committee on the information contained in the related performance reports had been integrated into the Committee's discussion of the proposed budgets for 2005-2006. The final performance report for UNMIBH was contained in documents A/59/751 and A/59/736/Add.8 and the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals with respect to the Mission. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee in documents A/59/620, A/59/656/Add.1 and A/59/736/Add.6 related to posts in UNFICYP. The Advisory Committee welcomed the Force's intention to convert a number of international posts to national posts and to hand over functions from international staff to national staff. It had consistently emphasized the importance of strengthening the capacity and role of national staff in United Nations peacekeeping missions, which could lower overhead costs, without decreasing efficiency. UNFICYP and other missions should pursue efforts in that area.

25. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposals with respect to UNMEE, as reflected in documents A/59/616, A/59/636 and Corr.1 and A/59/736/Add.10. It had been informed that the current vacancy rate for international staff at UNMEE stood at 22 per cent, due to the high turnover of staff as a result of the start-up of new peacekeeping missions and the expansion of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Although the Advisory Committee felt that it was good for experienced staff to be mobile and to be available to meet the requirements of new missions, the situation should be monitored in order to avoid disruption in the Mission's activities and ways found to retain required experienced staff. The Advisory Committee had been provided with information on the support provided by UNMEE to other United Nations and non-United Nations entities. In that connection, uniform procedures regarding reimbursement from partners should be established and care taken to monitor the costs. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information that use of the executive jet had been discontinued and that alternative arrangements were working well.

26. The reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee in documents A/59/622, A/59/634 and A/59/736/Add.7 concerning the financing of UNOMIG related mainly to the Committee's recommendations on posts and helicopters. Negotiations on the status-of-mission agreement for UNOMIG should be finalized and the format and presentation of results-based budgeting improved. Not only was the manner in which the management review of the Mission had been conducted particularly troubling, but the staffing requirements and structure of the Mission had now become irrelevant, resulting in a waste of time and resources. The Administration should draw lessons from that experience and hold managers accountable for their inaction or delayed action. All future reviews undertaken by management should be finalized in a timely manner to ensure the relevance of the findings reported. With regard to the establishment and/or reclassification of posts related to security, the Advisory Committee recommended that the security set-up of the Mission should be thoroughly analysed by the newly established Department of Safety and Security and the results of that analysis reflected in the subsequent budget submission for UNOMIG. Pending that, no action should be taken with regard to the proposed changes. The Advisory Committee expected significant improvements to be made in the policy for vehicle and equipment procurement and recommended a $300,000 reduction in the rental and operation of helicopters, having concluded that that item had been significantly overbudgeted.

27. With regard to the financing of UNIKOM, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General

Assembly should take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/614 and A/59/736/Add.14).

28. The reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee regarding the financing of UNMIK was related to the requested provision for travel. Despite an almost 100 per cent budget implementation rate, large amounts of prior-period obligations that had been included in the performance reports as expenditures had been subsequently cancelled. Missions like UNMIK which were downsizing should pay increased attention to proper budget discipline and their evolving role in response to changed circumstances and new challenges should be explained in a transparent manner and linked to staffing and other proposals. With regard to the proper grading of posts at UNMIK, the Advisory Committee reiterated its view that if functions could be consistently performed by staff at grades lower than the budgeted level of particular posts, then those posts should be considered for downward classification. Special post allowances should be restricted to exceptional circumstances when a staff member at a lower grade was temporarily performing functions at a higher grade pending the filling of the post at its appropriate level. The Advisory Committee was of the view that the proposed travel programme should be further rationalized through the elimination of what appeared to be redundant trips by Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff to UNMIK for familiarization, assessment and provision of policy guidance and through a significant reduction in the number and duration of trips by UNMIK personnel, especially outside the Mission area.

29. In its report on the financing of UNMIL (A/59/624, A/59/630 and A/59/736/Add.11), the Advisory Committee called for a reduction in the number of posts requested. With regard to the performance report, it had noted the need to correct a number of entry and coding errors and expected such errors to be corrected prior to submission, particularly in view of the fact that budget cycle dates were fixed and the related work should be planned well in advance. The Advisory Committee had noted with satisfaction that, in general, the presentation of the budget of UNMIL had taken into account observations made in the Committee's earlier report and that quantitative and qualitative performance indicators had been used to measure achieved and planned outputs. The Advisory Committee trusted that UNMIL would continue to refine its results-based budgeting presentation. Regarding his sixth progress report on UNMIL, in which the Secretary-General proposed that the Security Council should authorize an additional 120 civilian police personnel for six months, commencing in August 2005, the Advisory Committee would consider any additional budgetary requirements that might arise in that respect.

30. The Advisory Committee's report included a discussion of the implications of the closure of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs office in Liberia, which was staffed with 32 Professional and 14 administrative personnel. Given the continued need for humanitarian relief coordination, the Advisory Committee hoped that UNMIL would develop a long-term perspective on how functions currently within the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Humanitarian Coordination, Rehabilitation, Recovery and Reconstruction would be transformed and eventually phased out and expected an update on the matter during the 2006-2007 budget presentation.

31. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposal for the financing of UNDOF. Given the long-standing nature of the Mission and its stability and efficiency, the Advisory Committee commended the noticeable improvements in the presentation of the results-based budgeting framework and expected an update on the extensive three-year Force modernization programme, which it also welcomed. Clear indications should be given by the Security Council before additional resources for increases in troop strength were requested and policy on the supply of armoured personnel carriers should also be rationalized.

32. Similarly, the Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposal for UNIFIL which, like UNDOF, was a long-standing, stable, and well-run mission. The Advisory Committee commended UNIFIL and Headquarters for working together to introduce improved rations inventory and distribution controls and for enhancing regional cooperation in establishing a common rations contractor with UNDOF. It recommended that UNIFIL, in close cooperation with Headquarters, should continue to monitor the cost and quality of rations provided by the current vendor. It also noted the Force's successful efforts to reduce travel expenses by, among other measures, combining Headquarters visits to United Nations missions in the Middle East. The

Advisory Committee was also encouraged by the increased use of such integrated communications facilities as videoconferencing.

33. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the full amount proposed by the Secretary-General for the financing of UNAMSIL for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. As the Secretariat would be submitting corrected figures, the Advisory Committee's report might have to be revised accordingly. The cost overruns indicated in the performance report for UNAMSIL as resulting from the conversion of 120 staff members from the 300 to the 100 series of the Staff Rules needed to be established in a fully transparent manner and presented in the relevant peacekeeping budgets. The Advisory Committee noted extensive travel plans for UNAMSIL, which were hard to justify for a Mission that was nearing liquidation and recommended that the travel programme should be rationalized. Its report on UNAMSIL contained a section on liquidation activities covering assets disposal, environmental clean-up, high staff turnover, oversight during the liquidation phase and pending death and disability cases. It stressed the need for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to fully support UNAMSIL in maintaining appropriate levels of experienced staff during the important liquidation phase and drew the attention of UNAMSIL to the heightened need for close oversight by internal auditors during that phase. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, one of the lessons learned from the best practices observed was that the coordinated planning and implementation of activities with all stakeholders would make for a more cost-effective use of resources, increase the chance of successful outcomes and allow planning for realistic exit strategies. The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposals contained in document A/59/759 concerning the donation of UNAMSIL assets to the Government of Sierra Leone.

34. The Advisory Committee's recommendations with regard to the financing of MINURSO included a reduction related to budgeted vacancy/delayed deployment rates. For the vacant posts placed on hold pending the outcome of the ongoing management review, the Advisory Committee hoped that the resulting proposals would be based on the actual levels of the positions filled and that a re-justification of the vacant posts would be provided or the posts abolished. The Advisory Committee drew attention to the observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning air operations and requested MINURSO to closely monitor the use of aircraft and to carry out a management review aimed at ensuring a more efficient utilization of air assets.

35. **Mr. Holovka** (Serbia and Montenegro) said that under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), the mandate of UNMIK was to maintain civil law and order, protect and promote humans rights, assure the safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes, and to secure their freedom of movement. Unfortunately, six years after the establishment of UNMIK, those prerequisites had not been met and he was astonished by the proposal to downsize the Mission in terms of both its composition and budget appropriation. Notwithstanding the Mission's high budget implementation rate, the resources saved should be maintained in the budget on the condition that they were reallocated and redirected at providing services of a substantial nature. That would facilitate greater safety and security for all and consequently contribute to the success of the Mission.

36. The performance report (A/59/623) failed to mention what the Mission had done to facilitate the return of the more than 220,000 internally displaced persons. He was concerned that the report interpreted freedom of movement of minorities to mean the daily escorted transport of 250 minority members to their place of work. Serbia and Montenegro could not agree with such an interpretation of the Mission's mandate under resolution 1244 (1999). Once again, moreover, the paramount issue of decentralization for the creation of a stable environment had been omitted from the planned activities, as detailed in document A/59/633.

37. If carried out, the proposed reductions should by no means affect the financial resources envisaged for security and the protection of minority rights, including freedom of movement and the right of return. If anything, those resources should be increased in order to fulfil basic humanitarian needs. His delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General's proposal for the budget of UNMIK for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 should explain in a more transparent manner the rationale for downsizing the Mission.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/59/SR.48

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
8 June 2005

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 48th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 3 May 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

Contents

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 106: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*)

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 125: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*continued*)

Agenda item 126: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (*continued*)

Agenda item 130: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*)

Agenda item 131: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991) (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

05-33026 (E)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*)

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (*continued*)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (*continued*)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers Programme (A/59/68 and Add.1 and A/59/736)

1. **Mr. Gorita** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), introducing via videoconference from Geneva the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers Programme (A/59/68), said that the Unit had evaluated the administrative and management structure and methods of the Programme with a view to recommending improvements to ensure the most efficient use of resources. Overall, the Programme had been considered dynamic and able to rapidly respond to changing and expanded demands. It was also committed to continuous improvement. The Unit's recommendations ranged from increasing the number of volunteers from underrepresented developing countries to reviewing conditions of service and seeking a clear definition of volunteers' privileges and immunities. Some had taken the view that the idea of volunteerism could be undermined by the expectation of financial gain or the idea that volunteers were a "cheap labour" alternative to United Nations staff.

2. The Unit had recommended that the Programme should focus on a reduced number of priority activities, use results-based budgeting, find ways to measure and present the results of its activities and establish a regular oversight cycle. The Programme's managers and the Secretary-General had welcomed the findings, and the Advisory Committee had made recommendations coinciding with those of the Unit itself, particularly regarding the participation of volunteers in peacekeeping operations.

3. **Mr. de Raad** (Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers Programme), introducing the comments of the Secretary-General (A/59/68/Add.1), said that those comments focused on the involvement of volunteers in peacekeeping operations and on the observations of the Advisory Committee.

4. Cooperation between the United Nations Volunteers Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was good, and had grown over the years. The global memorandum of understanding between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme (on behalf of the United Nations Volunteers Programme), signed on 18 December 2003, had been a landmark in that relationship. Volunteers had become involved at the early stages of peacekeeping operations and, serving as election observers and human rights officers, for example, complemented other United Nations staff.

5. The memorandum of understanding had addressed issues raised by the Joint Inspection Unit and the Advisory Committee, such as the parameters for volunteers' involvement in peacekeeping operations and their privileges and immunities, which were the same as those of other staff. Problems were rare and could be resolved by ensuring that the volunteers' terms of reference provided a solid management structure and defined lines of accountability. One remaining difficulty was that of issuing volunteers with United Nations laissez-passer. Resolving it would greatly help the work of the volunteers, particularly from the standpoint of travel, including emergency travel.

6. A regular cycle of reviews of the Programme's activities had been suggested. As the United Nations Volunteers Programme was administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), it was subject to the same administrative and oversight arrangements, which included an obligation to report on activities every two years.

Agenda item 106: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*) (A/59/5 (Vol. II) and Corr.1, A/59/704 and A/59/736)

7. **Mr. Cabatuan** (Chairman of the Audit Operations Committee of the United Nations Board of Auditors) said that he was encouraged by the General Assembly's use of the Board of Auditors reports as a source of information and recognized that their format and content could be improved. With regard to peacekeeping operations, the Board would try to strike a balance between financial and management audits, as the Advisory Committee suggested. He wished to point out that prioritizing the implementation of recommendations was principally in the hands of the Administration.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Support account for peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/58/767; A/59/714 and Add.1, A/59/730 and A/59/784)

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (*continued*) (A/59/681, A/59/691, A/59/701, A/59/703 and A/59/736 and Add.2)

Procurement and contract management of peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/58/761; A/59/688 and A/59/722)

Communication and information technology (continued) (A/58/740; A/59/736)

Training policy and evaluation system (*continued*) (A/58/753; A/59/736)

Recruitment (*continued*) (A/57/787; A/58/764 and A/58/765; A/59/736 and A/59/763)

Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/37 and Corr.1; A/59/292, A/59/708 and A/59/736)

Staffing of field missions, including the use of 300 and 100 series appointments (*continued*) (A/59/736 and A/59/762)

Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Regional investigators (*continued*) (A/59/546)

Global audit of field security management (*continued*) (A/59/702)

Mission subsistence allowance (*continued*) (A/59/698 and Add.1)

General report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the report of the Board of Auditors and on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/736)

Review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/794)

Feasibility of consolidating the accounts of the various peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/795)

Agenda item 125: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*continued*) (A/59/736/Add.8 and A/59/751)

Agenda item 126: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (*continued*) (A/59/620, A/59/656/Add.1 and A/59/736/Add.6)

Agenda item 130: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*) (A/59/616, A/59/636 and Corr.1 and A/59/736/Add.10)

Agenda item 131: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (*continued*) (A/59/622, A/59/634 and A/59/736/Add.7)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991) (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (*continued*) (A/59/614 and A/59/736/Add.14)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*) (A/59/623 and Corr.1, A/59/633 and A/59/736/Add.1)

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (*continued*) (A/59/624, A/59/630 and A/59/736/Add.11)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (*continued*) (A/59/625, A/59/653 and Corr.1 and 2 and A/59/736/Add.4)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/59/626, A/59/654 and A/59/736/Add.3)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/59/635 and Corr.1, A/59/736/Add.9, A/59/758 and Corr.1 and A/59/759)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (*continued*) (A/59/619, A/59/629 and A/59/736/Add.5)

8. **Mr. van den Bossche** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate country Turkey, the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Serbia and Montenegro, and, in addition, Iceland, said that United Nations peacekeeping operations faced many challenges ranging from an increase in the number, size and complexity of missions to damaging allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse against peacekeepers and field personnel. The peacekeeping budget, moreover, had risen to $5 billion a year and was placing enormous pressure on all Member States.

9. The European Union was pleased that the Secretariat had used results-based budgeting, provided more focused and specific indicators of achievement and established a clearer link between resources, expected accomplishments and outputs. The Secretariat should consider aligning peacekeeping budgets more closely with their objectives to improve presentation and facilitate monitoring.

10. The Union was deeply disappointed that the report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations requested in General Assembly decision 59/507 for submission to the Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-ninth session was unlikely to be presented until the second part of its resumed sixtieth session. While acknowledging the demands placed on the Secretariat, it was unreasonable to expect Member States to approve $5 billion of resources for peacekeeping operations without such a review. The Secretariat should at least supply basic information to help the Committee's decision-making.

11. The European Union was concerned that a number of management problems identified by the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee persisted and that the growing delay in the payment of assessed contributions was affecting the Organization's ability to meet its financial obligations.

12. The General Assembly had already acknowledged the importance of cross-cutting issues that affected all peacekeeping operations and the European Union was keen to explore those commonalities, which should result in the adoption of a resolution during the current session of the Assembly that addressed those policy issues.

13. While not advocating a rigid mathematical formula, the European Union reiterated its view that the level of the support account for peacekeeping operations must be commensurate with the number and size of active peacekeeping missions. The increase in the number of missions notwithstanding, some support account posts had not been justified in detail and appeared to duplicate existing Secretariat structures in certain areas, including information technology, training and recruitment. Furthermore, the support account seemed not to reflect the downsizing of missions or gains from investment in information technology and training. The European Union wondered whether such matters had been considered when establishing the support account budget.

14. The European Union supported the concept of integrated peacekeeping missions, which would encourage a system-wide approach to all aspects of peacekeeping and increase efficiency, but it could see no clear delineation on the ground between the functions of the social and humanitarian pillar of peacekeeping operations and the activities of the funds and programmes. It acknowledged that such matters were part of a broader policy debate, but would appreciate guidance from the Secretariat and Advisory Committee on the humanitarian and peacebuilding activities of peacekeeping operations.

15. Having played an active role in the discussions of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which had recommended the establishment of an independent investigative capacity to cope with allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, the European Union was disappointed that the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/59/L.20 on the comprehensive review on a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/59/28) had not made adequate provision for such a capacity. Discussions on the matter should be rapidly brought to a close and the Secretariat should explain to the Committee what resources were needed and how responsibilities would be divided between the

Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

16. The Secretariat should conclude negotiations with the Government of Italy on the enlargement of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, so that the first stage of the expansion plan could be financed. The new facilities could be used for training, short-term staff accommodation, strategic deployment stocks storage and other purposes.

17. The European Union remained a steadfast supporter of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It not only provided troops for United Nations missions but also trained and equipped other peacekeepers, such as those of the African Union, and provided a rapid deployment capacity. However, as the group contributing the most funds, it expected all peacekeeping operations to be efficiently run, budgets to focus on real needs and expenditure on information technology and training to produce demonstrable returns in terms of improved efficiency and performance, while still respecting the mandates established by the Security Council.

18. **Mr. Meyer** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group attached great importance to the examination of those issues that had a direct impact on all existing and future peacekeeping operations.

19. Policies should be implemented across all peacekeeping mission budgets with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the management process and the performance of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the execution of legislative mandates. Resources allocated should be used in accordance with the financial and administrative mechanisms established in the mandates of the General Assembly.

20. The Group was concerned at the shortcomings in the implementation of the air safety monitoring mechanism and in visits to registered air transportation companies. The lack of ongoing cooperation between the various missions and Headquarters in the area of rations management was another matter for concern.

21. While there was a need to finalize guidelines for the implementation of basic standards of conduct for United Nations employees, the establishment of Personnel Conduct Units might lead to the duplication of functions and an increased financial burden.

22. Procurement policies should apply to suppliers from all regions and should be geared towards increasing the participation of suppliers from developing countries.

23. The policies and procedures related to rotation and replenishment of strategic deployment stocks should be respected and every effort made to achieve homogeneity in the planning of air transportation in peacekeeping operations and to avoid existing discrepancies.

24. Human resources planning should be adequately managed in order to avoid duplication and an excessive proportion of higher category posts, thereby ensuring an accurate classification of posts.

25. In order to implement effective training policies and to promote better budgetary management of training-related travel needs, an adequate and coordinated use of the methodological elements and technological resources available was needed. Discrepancies in the criteria for procuring and replenishing ground transportation vehicles were a cause for concern. The Group was also concerned that the Galileo field assets control system had not been extended to all missions. A cost-benefit analysis was needed to determine the feasibility of using the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi to provide information technology and communication services that could lower mission costs. Full implementation of the information technology and communication strategy adopted by the General Assembly was also essential in order to avoid unnecessary redundancies.

26. **Ms. Buchanan** (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Canada and Australia, stressed the importance of the measures that had been recommended to strengthen the integrity, competitiveness and sound management of the procurement system and to improve the access of local and non-local suppliers. While many practical measures had been taken to improve the process and reduce lead times, some important measures were still awaited, including the issuance of ethical guidelines for procurement personnel.

27. The delegations on whose behalf she spoke were strong advocates of training and investment in people. The United Nations had important training responsibilities that went beyond its own staff to include support for the efforts of countries supplying troops and police. It therefore needed a clear training

policy and strategy that would define the clients, desired outcomes, operating methods, resource needs and evaluation methods. Such a context was essential to enable understanding of important proposals to create new capacities, such as the proposed training cell in Brindisi. The report on the training policy and evaluation system of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/753), while a step in the right direction, offered little information on the lessons that were in fact being learned and more was needed than broad principles and priorities. The report, moreover, noted that there were multiple training structures based on the type of personnel served. Although training had various clients, the merits of adopting a unified approach to the provision of training services should be examined.

28. Since the Secretary-General had indicated that the current peacekeeping human resources management model, which was based on people coming and going for one mission at a time, was not suited to current needs, he now needed to articulate an alternative approach for consideration by the General Assembly. Conditions of service were a key part of the equation. The Assembly had already mandated for its sixty-first session comprehensive reports on harmonizing conditions of service or creating a peacekeeping stream. In the interim, the Secretary-General must be able to continue to reappoint needed staff from 300 series contracts to 100 series contracts, as outlined in resolution 59/266.

29. There was no basis for changing the character or purpose of the mission subsistence allowance, which should be seen as precisely that and not as a tool to compensate for difficulty of life or hardship. While those other factors were important, compensatory mechanisms already existed for some staff. Furthermore, issues related to compensation should be addressed in the wider context of conditions of service as a whole rather than through such a limited tool as the mission subsistence allowance.

30. More timely recruitment and placement was essential and the further use of rosters based on generic vacancy announcements should accelerate that process. Regulatory or procedural impediments to making such appointments should be identified and referred, if necessary, to the General Assembly for action.

31. There was need for increased use of national personnel in field missions. More innovative and dynamic measures should be taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management within the existing rules. Too limited a concept of capacity-building seemed to apply. In addition, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) needed to review, as a matter of priority, archaic limitations on the use of national officers.

32. The support account was a budgetary concept not a programme. As such, it provided primarily for administrative functions carried out jointly by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management. To go beyond considering whether any particular additional post was required, it would first be necessary to consider whether the way the work was done was in fact efficient. To that end, reviews should be initiated with the support of OIOS.

33. The delegations on whose behalf she spoke strongly supported the two main ideas reflected in the Secretary-General's proposed response to the issues of sexual exploitation and abuse, namely, strengthening capacity to ensure appropriate personal conduct by personnel in the field and strengthening the investigative capacity of OIOS. It was imperative for the Secretary-General to clarify how the whole spectrum of personal conduct functions would work, including the role of OIOS in conducting investigations.

34. In addition to tackling sexual exploitation and abuse, peacekeeping operations also needed to more broadly address the gender dimensions of their work. To that end, all peacekeepers should undergo the gender training offered by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

35. The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit was an important centre of innovation and its assumption of operational functions should be managed in a way that would not diminish its role as a think-tank. It was also important to ensure the sound functioning of the Civilian Police Division.

36. One of the most difficult cross-cutting issues was perhaps the functioning of the integrated mission concept. While their delegations were open to the argument that a robust strategic planning capacity and the creation of Joint Mission Analysis Cells could strengthen integration and common purpose within missions, the case needed to be made more comprehensively. It was surprising that there was still

no policy on the Cells, given that several had been proposed.

37. The lack of funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the second Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General function was a matter of concern. The fact that a report on the mission structure, which might have informed a discussion on the role of donor coordination within the structure of missions, was not available was also disappointing.

38. The continuum of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, humanitarian and development work was clearly vital in many missions. However, who did what and who paid for what remained unclear. The possible use of assessed budgets for the delivery of what had traditionally been project implementation merited policy discussion, including information on why that function might no longer be considered a donor-funded activity in some contexts.

39. The additional demands placed on peacekeeping did not lessen expectations for peacekeeping resources to be robustly justified and for missions to be well managed. Owing to the scope of peacekeeping activities, their delegations put added focus on generic management policy issues and would therefore pay particular attention to the proposed draft resolution on cross-cutting issues.

40. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) said that since the proposed budget for 2005-2006 was expected to reach an unprecedented level, his Government was paying closer attention to whether it was justified and whether the Secretary-General had developed a management mechanism to ensure the effective and efficient use of Member States' resources.

41. He regretted the fact that neither the report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations, which had been requested by the General Assembly in its decision 59/507, nor an overview report concerning the financing of peacekeeping operations had been submitted to the Assembly at its current session. Those reports would have afforded the Secretary-General a good opportunity to explain to Member States his commitment to more efficient and effective management of peacekeeping operations at Headquarters and in the field.

42. The Advisory Committee's report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, and on the report of the Board of Auditors (A/59/736) provided very informative views on cross-cutting and management policy issues relating to peacekeeping operations, while the report of the Board of Auditors (A/59/5 (Vol. II)) also provided a high quality of analysis on management issues. The recommendations of both bodies should be followed up and implemented without delay to ensure that assessed contributions were efficiently utilized.

43. The General Assembly should accept the recommendation of the Advisory Committee contained in document A/59/736 and provide clear guidance to the Secretary-General on the management of peacekeeping operations. Since Member States needed to see concrete results, the Secretary-General should report on the implementation of the decisions made and on the results achieved in his forthcoming overview report.

44. His delegation intended to pursue discipline in the budgets of individual missions, while paying due attention to the operating requirements of each mission. Since many shared issues were management-related, it was essential for the Fifth Committee to tackle cross-cutting issues in order to discharge its responsibilities on budgetary and management matters. His delegation would actively participate in the discussion on the cross-cutting resolution, which would be a prerequisite for approving the proposed budget of each individual mission.

45. The Secretariat's tendency to use the budgets of the peacekeeping operations to introduce initiatives with policy implications was a matter of concern. The Secretary-General should seek decisions on policy matters from the General Assembly in order to maintain budgetary discipline and efficient resource management in the Secretariat.

46. The concept of integrated and complex peacekeeping missions was welcome, since close cooperation was essential for the most efficient and effective use of available resources. However, assessed peacekeeping contributions should not be used for activities traditionally funded through voluntary contributions.

47. The Secretary-General's proposal to convert a number of posts in several missions would require careful study. His delegation looked forward to receiving a full explanation with a view to ensuring the justified and transparent management of posts.

48. His delegation noted with interest that the rate of increase in the budget of the support account was far greater than that of the total budget of peacekeeping operations. It fully agreed with the Advisory Committee that the efficiency and effectiveness of the management process at Headquarters and in the field needed to be regularly reviewed before additional resources were requested. Every effort should be made to justify not only new resource requirements but also the totality of resources. While a peacekeeping mission might sometimes require new functions, that did not automatically justify the establishment of new posts. Instead, existing functions and resources first needed to be reviewed and redeployed with full coordination between missions and departments at Headquarters.

49. **Ms. Attwooll** (United States of America) said that, in order to expedite the Committee's work, her delegation would make only one statement on peacekeeping issues. She would therefore touch on a number of matters in addition to those on the agenda for the current meeting.

50. She paid tribute to the peacekeeping personnel who had lost their lives in the service of the United Nations. The firm commitment of the United States to peacekeeping was evidenced by her delegation's support and advocacy for mission mandates in the Security Council. Because of that commitment it also sought to identify and correct deficiencies in the management of peacekeeping so as to build stronger, more effective operations. That was particularly important in the light of the recent surge in peacekeeping activity, which had put a great strain on the Organization. Regrettably, the United Nations was not in a position to meet the new challenges it faced in the area of peacekeeping because of weak management, misconduct and a lack of accountability. Simply creating more jobs was not the answer to those problems.

51. With regard to individual peacekeeping missions, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was to be commended on its modernization programme, which had streamlined the Force's infrastructure and logistics support and improved communications facilities. The experience gained and lessons learned from the programme should be shared with all missions.

52. Her delegation would appreciate information on the cost to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) of administering staff away on temporary duty assignment to other missions. It also wished to know if there were standard guidelines for determining whether to charge such staff to their parent duty station or to the mission to which they were temporarily assigned.

53. The failure of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to submit a fully justified budget for consideration by the Committee at the second part of the resumed session indicated a lack of direction on the part of management. That was regrettable, since the immense size and complexity of the Mission made it essential to have strong leadership and clear management strategies and accountability systems in place. Her delegation was also concerned about the proposal to establish a personnel conduct unit under the Mission's humanitarian pillar, rather than in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Given the appalling sexual abuse that had taken place at the Mission, there was a need to send a clear signal that misconduct would not be tolerated.

54. The proposed budget for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) contained a provision of $4.6 million for what were termed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes but in fact entailed only reintegration activities. While her delegation fully supported the concept of DDR and recognized its role in peacebuilding, it believed that the reintegration element of such programmes should be conducted and funded by United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes rather than by peacekeeping missions, which had other competing priorities.

55. On issues of a more overarching nature, the proposal to convert some personnel on special service or individual contractor agreements to national General Service staff was an attempt to establish new posts through the back door. Her delegation welcomed the information provided by the Advisory Committee on the functions of the 64 individual contractors proposed for conversion at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/59/736/Add.2, annex IV). However, in the

interests of transparency, the Secretariat should have provided similar information for UNDOF and UNIFIL.

56. The rate of increase in the budget for the support account was far greater than that of the budgets for peacekeeping missions. A total of 110 additional posts had been requested for the support account, yet no information was provided on the redeployment of posts dedicated to closed or downsized missions or on efforts to coordinate with other Secretariat departments in order to avoid duplication. Her delegation questioned the need for the additional posts, particularly taking into account the efficiencies expected following investments in information technology and the anticipated delegation of authority to the field. Many rejustified posts appeared to duplicate the functions of existing posts. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not seem able to distinguish between functions that were essential for good mission management and those that were merely desirable. The failure to provide a report on the management structure review requested by the General Assembly reflected a lack of vision on the part of managers in some of the larger and newer missions, where it was most needed.

57. Her delegation wished to know what amount of mission resources had been used to finance the posts of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in charge of the humanitarian pillar. The lack of a formal agreement with UNDP regarding the funding of those posts reflected a more general failure to achieve a clear division of responsibilities between peacekeeping missions and United Nations system agencies in the field and raised questions about the role, functioning and effectiveness of the humanitarian pillar. Her delegation was especially concerned about the use of assessed contributions to fund humanitarian activities, which took away the incentive for Member States to honour their voluntary pledges. While her delegation supported the inclusion of a humanitarian component in complex missions, it questioned whether that function could fulfil its mandate as currently structured.

58. With regard to sexual exploitation and abuse, her delegation noted with satisfaction that the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group at the 2005 substantive session (A/59/19) was the first step towards creating an institutional culture of zero tolerance. It also welcomed the proposal in the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2005/2006 (A/59/730) to increase the capacity of the Investigations Division of OIOS. There was a need to educate mission personnel about the code of conduct and to establish a focal point for reporting of allegations. Her delegation looked forward to discussing the role of Personnel Conduct Units in that regard.

59. The ongoing cooperation between MONUC and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) was most welcome. It would be interesting to learn about other areas of cooperation between missions, particularly in West Africa. The experience gained and lessons learned should be shared and increased mission cooperation encouraged.

60. Lastly, in the next four weeks, the Committee was due to consider and take action on nearly 150 reports. The situation was unmanageable and had been exacerbated by the late issuance of documentation. The Committee was simply unable to give the items on its agenda the careful consideration they deserved. She therefore looked forward to working with other delegations to find a reasonable way forward.

61. **Ms. Wang** Xinxia (China) said she also agreed with previous speakers that both a management review of peacekeeping activities and an overview report concerning the financing of peacekeeping operations should have been submitted.

62. Her delegation had taken note of the Advisory Committee's report contained in document A/59/736 and hoped that it would help peacekeeping operations to enhance their level of management and effective utilization of peacekeeping resources. In that respect, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should provide its full cooperation to ensure the smooth running of the audit process.

63. For the period ended 30 June 2003, 38 per cent of the audit recommendations had been implemented, 48 per cent were under implementation and 14 per cent had not been implemented. In that connection, her delegation supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the relevant departments or organs should provide time frames for implementation of the recommendations, including specific actions to be taken and external factors that might hamper full implementation.

64. She noted with concern cases of serious non-compliance with administrative instructions, which had

led to overexpenditure. Those problems should be addressed without delay.

65. She welcomed the comments of the Advisory Committee in its report on the support account (A/59/784) and noted that the level of the account had increased by 217 per cent over the previous six years and that there had been a large corresponding increase in human resource capacity in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that, in the presentation of the requirements for the support account, every effort should be made to justify the totality of resources. The increase in requirements could not be delinked from an assessment of the management processes. The utilization of information and communication technology, the training of personnel and the adoption of new management methods should enhance efficiency and increase savings.

66. Her delegation welcomed the request for the Board of Auditors to review the evolution of the support account and its departure from its original concept. Such a study would be useful if it helped Member States to better understand the real needs of the support account.

67. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Republic of Korea) said that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts were to be commended for their efforts to deal with the recent surge in peacekeeping activities, which had placed a great strain on the Secretariat. Her delegation was concerned, however, about the unevenness in the quality of presentation of the budget proposals of the various peacekeeping missions. With clearer guidance and leadership from Headquarters, greater standardization could be achieved.

68. Overall expenditure on peacekeeping was expected to exceed $5 billion in 2005/2006, which would result in huge increases in Member States' assessed contributions. It was therefore imperative to address the chaotic situation in the administration and financing of peacekeeping operations. Her delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendations in that regard and was counting on it to play an active role in fostering greater consistency and efficiency. There must also be a concerted effort, both in missions and at Headquarters, to carry out peacekeeping mandates as cost-effectively as possible. In 2003/2004, the level of unpaid peacekeeping assessments had increased by 41 per cent. In order to prevent an even larger increase in the next budget cycle, the Secretariat must demonstrate that every effort was being made to avoid unnecessary costs. That would also enhance the overall effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

69. Her delegation shared the Advisory Committee's concerns about the problem of top-heavy administrative structures, particularly in complex integrated missions. It was dismayed that, in some cases, little thought was being given to streamlining and rationalizing structures and to reassessing the need for a number of higher level posts. Greater attention should be paid to the matter at Headquarters. In that connection, the failure to report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations was regrettable.

70. The overbudgeting of air transportation requirements demonstrated a lack of financial responsibility. Significant savings could be made by expanding inter-agency cooperation in the use of air assets, while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should continue its efforts to regionalize air operations.

71. Her delegation recognized the need for additional posts to be established under the support account in the light of the expansion of peacekeeping activities. However, it agreed with the Advisory Committee that the support account had evolved well beyond what had been originally foreseen and that it would be helpful to review the changes in the use of the support account mechanism and consider the most appropriate structure for it in the future.

72. The importance of United Nations humanitarian activities in post-conflict situations could not be overstated. Nevertheless, her delegation was concerned about the use of peacekeeping assessments to fund activities that were traditionally financed through voluntary contributions. In complex integrated missions, it might be difficult to keep peacekeeping and humanitarian activities entirely separate. However, the issue should be clarified with guidance from the General Assembly.

73. Her delegation was encouraged by the report of OIOS on the first year of experience of regional investigators in two hubs, Vienna and Nairobi (A/59/546). It supported the conclusion of OIOS that a combination of regional and resident investigators would be the most effective approach to meeting the

demand for immediate action in significant cases in field operations. The investigation into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by civilian and uniformed personnel in MONUC had demonstrated the effectiveness of that approach. Swift investigations were the first step towards re-establishing the credibility of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and the good start made at MONUC should be maintained.

74. **Mr. Simancas** (Mexico) said that the Government of Mexico had made a great effort to meet its financial commitments to peacekeeping operations and it therefore expected strict financial discipline and the implementation of spending controls with regard to peacekeeping operations.

75. His delegation shared the concerns about the tendency on the part of the Administration to use the budgets of the peacekeeping operations to introduce initiatives with policy implications, rather than first seeking the necessary policy guidance from the General Assembly. It also regretted that the report requested by the Assembly in decision 59/507 had not been submitted, particularly in the light of the unprecedented budget.

76. **Mr. Pisagih** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), said that the Mission was a flagship operation staffed by dedicated men and women. The Group had therefore been saddened to learn of the deaths of Mission personnel from Lassa fever. It was deeply concerned about the increased incidence of the disease and would welcome an assurance that every effort was being made to address the situation. It also trusted that all pending disability cases would be settled expeditiously.

77. Concerning the performance report on the budget of the Mission for 2003/2004 (A/59/653), the Group welcomed the savings realized, the low number of death and disability cases and the lower than budgeted vacancy rate. It was concerned, however, about the continued exodus of well-trained staff during the critical drawdown phase. The Group had called, at the main part of the session, for the introduction of mechanisms to curb that phenomenon. It was therefore alarmed that the high turnover of staff at UNAMSIL had continued. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that the Mission maintained appropriate levels of experienced staff.

78. With regard to the budget for UNAMSIL for 2005/2006 (A/59/758), the amount requested was reasonable and should be approved. The Group supported the decision to prepare a budget in two parts, covering an initial six-month maintenance period and a subsequent six-month liquidation phase. The clear and transparent results-based presentation was also welcome. It was important, during the drawdown phase, to give proper attention to oversight functions. Regrettably, not all of the posts allocated to OIOS for UNAMSIL had been filled. The Group wished to know why those posts remained unencumbered and when they would be filled.

79. The downsizing of the Mission had proceeded more rapidly than anticipated. While the security situation remained calm, the exit strategy must be guided by the need to preserve the gains made, and every effort must be made to maintain sufficient capacity for rapid response in UNAMSIL. Lastly, he reiterated that peace and security could be sustained only with economic and social development.

80. **Ms. Poku** (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the African Group on the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), said that the performance report on the Mission's budget for the period from 1 August 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/624) had given Member States an insight into the activities carried out by the Mission in its start-up phase. While the Mission had been able to carry out some of the activities that it had planned under its indicators of achievement, it had deferred others because of delays in the recruitment of Mission staff.

81. The high vacancy rates affected the Mission's capacity to deal with the humanitarian and human rights objectives listed under component 2 of the report and consequently Liberia's ability to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to achieve national reconciliation. The Group would welcome information on planned activities that had been delayed and on current international and national staff incumbency rates. The African Group noted with interest paragraphs 118 to 122 of the report of the Board of Auditors on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/59/736), which dealt with the Galaxy system. The system must be urgently improved and greater efforts made to address the vacancy rate problem.

82. On the issue of coordination among missions in the subregion, the Group was pleased with the cooperation between UNMIL and UNAMSIL and noted that, owing to the downsizing of UNAMSIL, UNMIL had had to establish offices of its own in Accra, Ghana and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The Group hoped that UNMIL and other peacekeeping operations would nevertheless be guided by lessons learned and best practices from UNAMSIL and trusted that the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit would work towards that end. It also hoped that future results-based budgeting by the Advisory Committee would be clearer and more transparent.

83. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the African Group welcomed the request for $722,633,600 and had noted the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a reduction of $211,500 in the proposed budget of UNMIL. It had also noted the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee that the current proposed medical budget was $1,035,300 lower than the 2004-05 budget appropriation. The African Group was perplexed at the ambitious signal that such a proposed budget would send, especially given that the clear and present danger of contagious diseases, such as Lassa fever, cerebral malaria and typhoid fever, suggested the need for increased rather than reduced resources. The Group would appreciate further clarification on that matter.

84. Of concern as well were the 19 reported cases of psychological stress disorder, including suicides, which indicated seriously low staff morale. The Group would like to know what immediate steps were being taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to address that crisis. The physical and psychological well-being of staff should be of paramount importance. The Group therefore urged the Department to take immediate steps to address the factors that contributed to such low morale and to brief the General Assembly accordingly.

85. The African Group was also concerned by the sudden departure of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs from Liberia, leaving UNMIL to assume its functions. In addition, it was concerned about the potential shortfall in the $40 million that was urgently needed for the rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants. Because any shortfall could jeopardize such programmes, the Group called on the Secretary-General to make every effort to resolve the matter. The Group had also taken note of the proposed new and abolished posts in UNMIL and supported the Advisory Committee's observation that it would be ready to consider any additional budgetary requirements that might arise from Security Council authorization of an additional 120 civilian police personnel for UNMIL, as suggested in the Secretary-General's sixth progress report on UNMIL.

86. The African Group was encouraged by the overall progress made by the Mission, ranging from the submission of its financial reports, in which inconsistencies in the Mission's start-up phase had been addressed, to the overall performance report, which was frank and objective. Lastly, as the Mission drew down gradually, every effort must be made to safeguard the gains made.

87. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa) said that the overview report of the Advisory Committee and the findings of the oversight bodies provided a good basis for the Committee's consideration of peacekeeping policy matters under agenda item 123. The implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and oversight bodies should lead to efficiencies in the financial period beginning 1 July 2005 and guide the Secretariat's preparations for future budget submissions.

88. The demands on United Nations peacekeeping to assist countries emerging from conflict to achieve lasting peace were unprecedented. The United Nations was being called on to expand its peacekeeping role in a number of conflicts around the world, and the scale and complexity of new operations was putting a heavy burden on the resources and capacities of the Organization. Member States must therefore provide the Organization with the resources needed to meet the challenges before it.

89. The complexity of United Nations peacekeeping operations had necessitated further integration across the United Nations system, which was in keeping with the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations concerning the need for common approaches and comprehensive strategies. Given the positive impact that an integrated approach had had on resolving the conflict in Sierra Leone, her delegation hoped that the Secretariat would address some of the outstanding matters related to the administration of such an approach, as highlighted by the Advisory Committee.

90. The Committee was afforded an ideal opportunity at the current session to reflect on the implementation of the reforms recommended in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), or the Brahimi report. The report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/59/608) had raised the question of whether the United Nations could meet the simultaneous demands of planning, deploying, supporting and managing operations, given the scale and complexity of new operations, and whether the necessary resources could be generated and deployed rapidly enough to support United Nations peacekeeping operations. While the Committee might not be able to answer those questions conclusively, audits conducted by internal and external oversight bodies in conjunction with the Advisory Committee would facilitate assessment of the implementation of reform efforts that fell within the Committee's purview.

91. Significant progress had been made through the Brahimi report to enhance the capacity of Headquarters to plan and manage peacekeeping operations in all their aspects. It was imperative that the changes made at Headquarters were translated into effective work in the field. Her delegation therefore welcomed such developments as improvements in the preparation and submission of budgets, in the methodology for budgeting international staff costs, in the delivery of food rations, and in the management of air operations and utilization of training resources. The measures proposed by the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee would lead to further improvements in the overall management of peacekeeping operations.

92. Member States had a shared responsibility to ensure that the United Nations had adequate personnel and funding for rapid deployment of peacekeeping operations. The benefits of having such a capability had been demonstrated in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and Sudan. Her delegation noted that the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee had proposed several measures to improve the functioning of the Logistics Base at Brindisi and the maintenance of strategic deployment stocks. It however regretted that less than 10 per cent of the total value of procurement for the strategic deployment stocks had been awarded to companies from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, which accounted for some two thirds of the Members of the Organization. It therefore urged the Secretariat to comply with the spirit of General Assembly resolution 56/292.

93. With regard to the support account, her Government was in favour of adequate staffing and resources to ensure the effective provision of administrative and logistical support by Headquarters to the field. Her delegation hoped that the additional posts requested in the 2005-2006 budget would alleviate the strain on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations caused by the surge in the level of peacekeeping activity. The analysis of the support account requested by the Advisory Committee should take into account the role played by the Department, within the level of resources approved for the support account, in supporting an increasing number of special political missions.

94. With regard to the financing of specific peacekeeping operations, her delegation fully supported the resource requirements submitted by the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), UNAMSIL and UNMIL. It also wished to acknowledge the important contribution that UNAMSIL had made towards the establishment of UNMIL. The Secretariat had pursued greater cooperation among the peacekeeping operations in Africa, and UNAMSIL, UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) had been increasing the level of information-sharing and the number of regular meetings between military and functional staff. Her delegation was also concerned at the precarious cash position of MINURSO owing to late or non-payment of dues, which was affecting its operations.

95. In conclusion, her delegation paid tribute to the men and women who served in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The United Nations was the most appropriate instrument for creating an environment in conflict areas that enabled communities to shape their own future.

96. **Mr. Elji** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that UNDOF had been established in response to the occupation of the Golan Heights by Israel, which continued to defy Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces. Responsibility for

financing UNDOF should therefore fall to the occupying and aggressive Power in accordance with the relevant resolutions.

97. His delegation approved the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Assembly should accept the Secretary-General's proposal for the financing of UNDOF. It also reiterated the importance of increased dialogue with all peacekeeping partners. His Government had provided UNDOF with every necessary support and appreciated the work being done by the Force and by the Office of the Force Commander. It welcomed cooperation among the parties concerned as well as between the Syrian delegation and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the Controller. Lastly, his delegation expressed its appreciation to the countries that contributed troops to UNDOF.

98. **Mr. Sach** (Controller) said that his Office would be considering the important recommendations put forward in the reports of the Advisory Committee and Board of Auditors to strengthen its approach to peacekeeping financing matters. Many delegations had expressed regret over the lack of a report on management structure. The surge in peacekeeping operations since 2003 had made it impossible, however, to devote time to the preparation of such a report. Nevertheless, efforts were continuing within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to lay the groundwork for a review of management structures in peacekeeping operations. A human resource database had been completed by the Personnel Management and Support Service of the Department in November 2004 and since December 2004 work had been done to reconcile the staffing tables and records of the missions with those at Headquarters. An analysis that covered all missions was expected to be completed by July 2005 and the staffing structures of MINUSTAH, UNOCI and ONUB were being reviewed and adjustments made in line with resource requirements. A report on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations would be useful even though it had not been mandated. Other pressing matters, however, such as the completion of financing action for a number of missions and preparing the budgets of all missions for the forthcoming year, had diverted attention from the preparation of the requested report. An overview report was the appropriate framework for discussion and putting forward proposals and his Office expected to revert to such an arrangement at the Assembly's sixtieth session.

99. The requested non-paper on the financing of DDR programmes would be available during informal consultations. Financing would be determined by the extent to which the mandate of the Security Council recognized such programmes as essential to the mission's success. If no extrabudgetary funds were available, the programmes would need to be reflected for assessment purposes.

100. Concerning the complex issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, the Administration was moving in stages. There were provisions in the 2005-2006 budgets for the Personnel Conduct Units. Work was also being done to establish independent investigative capacity within the Organization. Some initial requirements for OIOS were reflected in the support account proposals before the Committee. The work would be expensive and complex and would be discussed at the Assembly's sixtieth session within the broader context of requirements for OIOS.

101. On the issue of the support account, given the stress experienced by the Secretariat, it was not possible to massively expand operations on the ground, without commensurate increases in capacity at Headquarters. The vehicle for such increases was the support account, which was true not only for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations but also for other departments that provided services for peacekeeping. Some delegations had suggested reviewing the issue in the context of the balance between the regular budget and support account provisions for the Department. He recalled that the issue of adding resources under the regular budget or support account had been discussed at length by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and that the Committee had decided to work under the support account.

102. On the subject of integrated missions, calls had been made for balancing the arrangements in place for the humanitarian pillar and the financing of the deputy special representatives for humanitarian matters, who were normally financed by UNDP. The approach that had been taken was governed by the broader mandates that the Committee had received from the Security Council. The recognition by the Council that peacebuilding activities required a broad approach had led to the promotion of integrated missions.

103. Turning to the questions posed concerning individual peacekeeping missions, he said that salaries and common staff costs for UNIFIL personnel away on temporary duty assignment to other missions were borne by the missions to which they were assigned. Concerning the medical issues identified by delegations, the Director of the Medical Services Division would shortly undertake a mission to West Africa to evaluate the psychological and psychiatric support provided to contingents at UNMIL and the measures taken to combat the outbreak of Lassa fever at UNAMSIL. The downsizing of the latter Mission was being managed in a way that ensured that essential staff were retained so that the Mission would be in a position to carry out its mandate. He had taken note of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Board of Auditors and looked forward to working with Member States to achieve further progress in strengthening the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

104. **Mr. Elnaggar** (Egypt) said that there was a need to review the timing of the Committee's consideration of peacekeeping budgets, particularly vis-à-vis its discussion of the regular budget. In that connection, it was necessary to take into account not only the status of preparedness of the relevant reports, but also the preparedness of delegations to consider them. The issue was a pressing one, since the Committee had a duty, as the Main Committee of the General Assembly responsible for administrative and budgetary matters, to give proper scrutiny to peacekeeping budgets. At the same time, it was not feasible for the Committee to consider each and every peacekeeping budget in depth. It must therefore provide the Secretariat with policy guidelines for the preparation of those budgets. Similarly, it must give serious thought to policy issues in the context of its consideration of the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.